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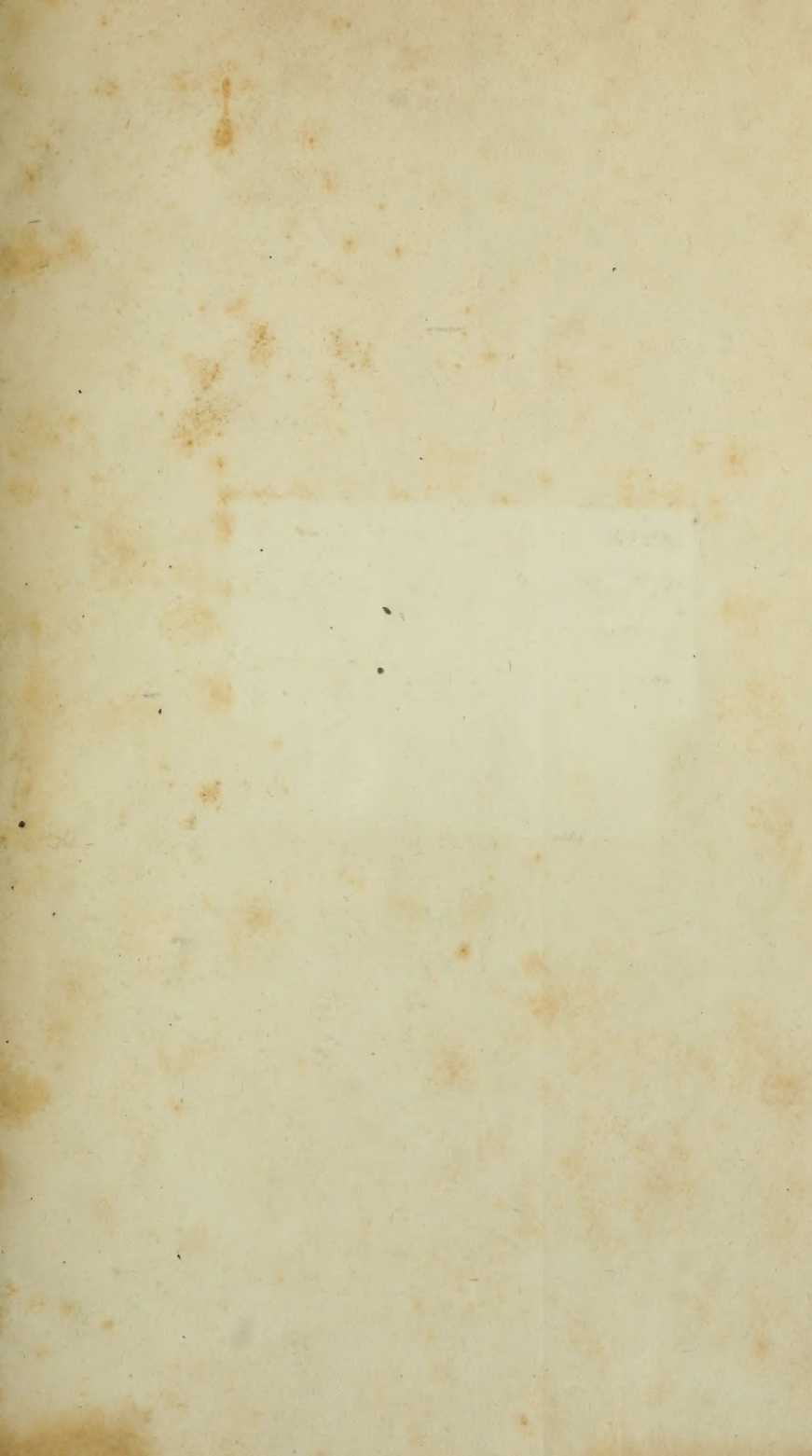
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INTRODUCTION  
TO THE  
NEW TESTAMENT.

BY  
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TRANSLATED FROM  
THE FOURTH EDITION OF THE GERMAN,  
AND  
CONSIDERABLY AUGMENTED WITH NOTES,

AND A  
DISSERTATION  
ON THE ORIGIN AND COMPOSITION  
OF THE  
THREE FIRST GOSPELS.

BY  
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VOL. IV.

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THE SECOND EDITION.

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LONDON;

*Printed by Luke Hansard,*  
FOR F. AND C. RIVINGTON, N<sup>o</sup>. 62, ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD.

1802.

Luke Hanford, Printer,  
Great Turnstile, Lincoln's Inn Fields;



# C O N T E N T S.

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## VOL. IV.

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## ERRATA.

### VOL. IV.

- PAGE 2. l. 20. for 'sections of this chapter' read 'chapters.'  
13. l. 7. erase 'when.'  
49. l. 27. for 'facts,' read 'feats.'  
104. l. 22. for 'foretold,' read 'forfeited.'  
112. l. 27. for 'that,' read 'not.'  
227. l. 2 from the bottom, for 'both,' read 'by both.'  
248. l. 25. for 'Εἰσαγωγῆς,' read 'Εἰσαγωγῆς.'



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INTRODUCTION  
TO THE  
SACRED WRITINGS  
OF THE  
NEW COVENANT.

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CHAP. X.

OF THE EPISTLES OF ST. PAUL IN GENERAL.

SECT. I.

*Of the order, in which St. Paul's Epistles are placed in the New Testament.*

ST. PAUL's Epistles are arranged in the New Testament, not according to the time, when they were written, but according to the supposed rank and importance of the communities, or persons, to which they were addressed. Hence the Epistles, which were sent to whole bodies of Christians are placed before those, which were sent to individuals. Of the former, the Epistle to the Romans has the first rank, because Rome was the capital of the world: and the two Epistles to the Corinthians come next in order, because Corinth was, at the time when St. Paul's Epistles were arranged, the principal city of Greece. The Epistle to the Galatians is placed in the third rank, because it was addressed to a whole nation, which, though considered as

less important than the cities of Rome, and Corinth, was deemed higher in rank, than other single cities. The Epistle to the Philippians was placed before those, which were sent to the Colossians and Thessalonians, not because Philippi was really a more important place, than either Colossæ or Thessalonica, but because Philippi was mistakenly supposed to be the principal city of Macedonia; a supposition, which arose from a false interpretation of Acts xvi. 12. Of the Epistles addressed to individuals, those to Timothy have the first rank, because he was a companion of St. Paul: and that to Philemon the last, because he does not appear to have been invested with any spiritual office. However in several Greek manuscripts, the Epistles of St. Paul are not all arranged according to the common order: for instance, in the Codex Vaticanus, the Epistle to the Galatians, and that to the Hebrews, the latter of which is placed immediately after the second Epistle to the Thessalonians<sup>2</sup>.

But in the following sections of this chapter, I shall treat of St. Paul's Epistles, not according to the order, in which they are placed in the New Testament, but according to the time, when they were written. On the subject of St. Paul's Epistles, the reader may consult, Millii Prolegomena, § 4 - 34. Joach. Langii Commentatio de vita et Epistolis Pauli, Buddei Ecclesia apostolica, Benson's History of the first planting the Christian Church, and particularly Lardner's Supplement to his Credibility of the Gospel History.

<sup>2</sup> See Vol. II. Ch. viii. Sect. 6. under the article Codex Vaticanus,

## SECT. II.

*St. Paul dictated his Epistles, and wrote a greater number, than those which are now extant.*

**I**T was the usual practice of St. Paul to dictate his Epistles<sup>a</sup>; and in some of them he has mentioned after his own name the name of his amanuensis, Timotheus or Silvanus for instance, as Dr. Heumann has shewn to be highly probable in his *Epistola de scribis epistolarum Pauli*. Dr. Hoffmann in his *Introductio in lectionem Epist. ad Colossenses*, Sect. ii. § 3. objects, that in the two Epistles to the Thessalonians, both Timotheus and Silvanus are named after St. Paul. But the Apostle in dictating his Epistles to the Thessalonians may have used two amanuenses, one of whom wrote one part, the other the other part of the Epistle: and the Thessalonians who knew the hand-writing both of Timotheus and Silvanus, had in that case a still stronger proof that the Epistle was genuine. Or the one may have written the Epistle, and the other, either in consequence of his approbation of it, or in consequence of being in some respect concerned in it, may have deserved to have his name mentioned with that of the amanuensis.

The whole number of St. Paul's Epistles now extant, even if we include the Epistle to the Hebrews, is only fourteen. Now if we consider the long duration of St. Paul's apostolic ministry, and the great fluency of his language, it is wholly incredible that these are the only Epistles, which he ever wrote. But, as Divine Providence has thought proper, that only fourteen should descend to posterity, we have no more reason to complain of the loss of his other Epistles, than that several of Christ's speeches, all of which contained the words of God, were not committed to writing. St. Paul in that Epistle to the Corinthians, which we call the first, alludes in ch. v. 9. to an Epistle, which he had already sent to the

<sup>a</sup> See Vol. I. Ch. vi. Sect. 2.



the Corinthians, but which is no longer extant. Further, St. Peter in his second Epistle ch. iii. 15. appeals to an Epistle, which St. Paul had written to those very persons, to whom he himself was writing in confirmation of the doctrine, that ‘the day of general judgement was deferred only, to give sinners an opportunity of repenting.’ But among those Epistles of St. Paul, which are now extant, there is none, which was addressed to all those communities, to which St. Peter addressed his two Epistles: and in none of them does St. Paul enter into a particular examination of that doctrine in support of which St. Peter had made his appeal<sup>b</sup>. It is probable therefore that St. Peter meant an Epistle, which is now lost<sup>c</sup>. If the reading of the ancient Codex Laudanus 3. and of the Syriac version, at Acts xvii. 5. λαβοντες επιβολην απ’ αυτου προς τον Σιλαν και Τιμοθεον, were genuine, it would follow that St. Paul, during his stay at Athens wrote an Epistle to Silas and Timotheus, which is likewise lost. But as this reading is supported by only two, though very respectable authorities, I shall not insist upon it: and I mention it rather, for the sake of curiosity, than for the sake of argument.

Dr. F. Stofch<sup>d</sup>, and Dr. Lardner<sup>e</sup>, have argued on the other side of the question, and have contended that the Epistles of St. Paul, which are now extant are the only Epistles, which the Apostle ever wrote. Their arguments however have not convinced me of the truth of this position. Dr. Stofch endeavours in the first place to invalidate the opinion, that St. Paul dictated his Epistles, and endeavours to shew that the Apostle wrote

<sup>b</sup> See the Introduction to the Epistle to the Hebrews, § 3.

<sup>c</sup> An objection however to this conclusion may be made from what St. Peter adds in the very next verse; ‘as also in *all* his Epistles, speaking in them of *these* things.’

<sup>d</sup> In his essay *De Epistolis Apostolorum idiographis*, published at Wolfenbüttel in 1751: and *De Epistolis Apostolorum non deperditis*, published at Gröningen in 1753.

<sup>e</sup> In his *Supplement to the Credibility of the Gospel History*, Vol. III. ch. 25.

wrote them all with his own hand. He thinks that the inspiration of these Epistles would have suffered, if they had been committed to writing by amanuenses, who were not inspired. Now whether this be true or not, it is wholly foreign to the present purpose: for we must not conclude that a thing really did happen, because we fancy, that it would have been better, if it had so happened. But I really see no greater injury, which could arise from the circumstance that St. Paul's Epistles were committed to writing by persons not inspired, than from the circumstance that they have been since copied and printed by uninspired persons. Besides, the Apostle probably examined them before he sent them away, and corrected whatever mistakes had been made by his amanuensis; which amounts nearly to the same, as if he had written them with his own hand. The book of the Prophet Jeremiah was not committed to writing by the Prophet himself, but by Baruch his scribe<sup>f</sup>: yet we do not therefore suppose that either its inspiration or its credibility is impaired.

With respect to the position that St. Paul wrote more Epistles, than those, which are now extant, I must beg leave to observe, that I do not ground my opinion merely on the above quoted passages from the Epistles of St. Paul and St. Peter: and therefore, even if it could be shewn, that they admit of a different construction from that, which I have put upon them, the opinion would not be confuted. I argue likewise from St. Paul's ready style and flowing language, which is that of an author, who makes writing his business and his daily practice, not that of a man, who suffers whole years to elapse, without writing a single epistle. The compositions of St. Paul are of a very remarkable kind: for though they are replete with matter, the author seems never to have been at a loss for the proper turns of expression. The words, which he has used, appear to have presented themselves without being sought: yet they are so refined and elegant, that the language of  
St.

<sup>f</sup> Jerem. xxxvi. 4. 17. 18.

St. Paul, though not classic Greek, may be considered as a pattern of epistolary writing. An author, who could write in this manner, must certainly have written more than fourteen Epistles during the whole course of his ministry.

But as Dr. Lardner has brought arguments to prove the contrary, and they are really more substantial than those of Dr. Stofch, I cannot conclude this section without taking notice of them.

1. Lardner argues, 'that we have only four genuine Gospels, and only one history of the Acts of the Apostles: and that we have no reason to suppose that more Gospels, or more ecclesiastical histories, were written by Apostles, or Apostolic men.'

Answer. These premises I grant: but I deny the application of them to the Epistles of St. Paul. There is a wide difference between writing books, and writing letters. No man of education passes his life, without engaging in epistolary correspondence: but not every man ventures to write a book. We must not therefore conclude, because only five or six what may be called books<sup>s</sup> were written by Apostles or Apostolic men, that only fourteen letters were written by St. Paul.

2. 'If more Epistles had been written, the Apostle or Apostles, who wrote them, would have taken care that they should be preserved, and transmitted to posterity, as well as those which have actually descended to us.'

Answer. That it was the will of the Apostles, or the design of divine Providence, that every Epistle written even by divine inspiration should descend to posterity, is by no means certain. Particular instructions might have been necessary for certain communities or individuals at the time when they were given, and yet those very instructions might be totally useless to those, who lived in latter ages, and under different circumstances.

Nay,

<sup>s</sup> The four Gospels, the Acts, and the Apocalypse: to which might be added, the first Epistle of St. John, which is more properly a book, than an Epistle.



Nay, what is still more, they might not only be useless, but prejudicial : for, if an Epistle be written to persons in a peculiar situation, with which we are unacquainted, we shall not only be unable to comprehend it, but shall be exposed to the danger of interpreting it falsely, and of ascribing therefore to the author doctrines, which he never intended to deliver. It was no more necessary, that all the Epistles of the Apostles should be preserved, than that all the discourses of Christ, which were certainly of not less importance, should be recorded by the Evangelists, who have thought proper to deliver only a select part of them. A Bible, or book of divine revelation, which is intended as a rule of faith and manners, must, at the same time that it contains every necessary precept, contain them likewise in a moderate compass. If the Bible consisted of many folios, as it probably would, if it contained an account of all the actions and speeches of Christ, and all that was written by the Apostles, few persons would read the whole of it ; and even of those, who gave themselves the trouble, perhaps not one would be able to retain in his memory the whole of its contents. This would be a very material inconvenience. For theologians themselves, who make the sacred writings their particular study, would never be able to recollect, when a dispute arose relative to a point of doctrine, whether that doctrine was delivered in the Bible, or not, or at least would be unable to pronounce with certainty, that it were not in the Bible: and to those, who are neither enabled by their education, nor permitted by their temporal occupations, to engage in theological inquiries, the inconvenience would be still greater. Lastly, as the Bible, moderate as it is at present in its size, is explained in commentaries, which consist of many folios, what a mass of commentary would overwhelm us, if the Bible itself were as large ! Instead therefore of supposing with Lardner, that it was the will of the Apostles, that all their Epistles should be preserved, I would conclude that this was no more their intention, than it was the intention of the

Evangelists that all the speeches of Christ should be recorded.

3. ‘No Christian community, which had received an Epistle from an Apostle, would have suffered that Epistle to be lost.’

Answer. This argument is applicable only to such Epistles, as were of importance : and it is not applicable even to these, if it be true, as I have endeavoured to shew in a preceding volume <sup>b</sup>, that the Apostles themselves were the editors of their own Epistles.

## CHAP. XI.

### OF THE EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS.

#### SECT. I.

*The Epistle to the Galatians is among those, which are now extant, the first which St. Paul wrote.*

**T**HAT the Epistle to the Galatians is the first of St. Paul’s Epistles is the most ancient opinion. It was asserted in the second century by Marcion<sup>i</sup>, whose opinion in respect to a plain matter of fact is not to be rejected, because he was a heretic. Tertullian likewise represents St. Paul as a novice in Christianity, when he wrote his Epistle to the Galatians <sup>k</sup>: though Tertullian  
does

<sup>b</sup> Vol. I. Ch. vi. Sect. 2.

<sup>i</sup> See Epiphan. Hæres. XLII. § 9.

<sup>k</sup> Tertullian, in his first book against Marcion, ch. xx. where the inquiry relates to what St. Paul had written in his Epistle to the Galatians, and particularly his censure of St. Peter in the second chapter, ascribes St. Paul’s zeal against Judaism to the recentness of his conversion, and to his want of that experience, by which he afterwards learnt to become, as it were, a Jew to the Jews, as well as a Greek to the Greeks. ‘Igitur si ferventer adhuc, ut Neophytus, adversus

does not say in positive terms that this Epistle was the first. But modern writers have in general rejected this opinion, as the reader will find on consulting Rumpæi *Commentatio critica*, p. 121—128. and Lardner's *Supplement*, p. 154—170. For this reason<sup>1</sup>, it will be necessary to state at large the arguments by which I think it may be supported.

St. Paul's first visit to the Galatians was not long after the council, which had been held in Jerusalem, as appears from Acts xvi. 4, 5, 6. 'and as they (namely, Paul and Silas) went through the cities, they delivered them the decrees for to keep, which were ordained of the Apostles and elders, which were at Jerusalem: and so were the churches established in the faith, and increased in number daily. Now when they had gone through Phrygia, and the region of Galatia, and were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia, &c.' From this passage we see that St. Paul preached the Gospel in Galatia; for the prohibition was confined to the Roman Proconsular province of Asia, to which Galatia is here opposed. This is further confirmed by Acts xviii. 23. where St. Luke relates, that St. Paul again visited Galatia, 'strengthening the disciples;' so that converts must have been made on his first visit<sup>m</sup>.

Now let us follow St. Paul on his first journey from Galatia to Beroëa in Macedonia, where he seems to have arrived in the same year, and we shall be convinced that he wrote his Epistle to the Galatians upon this journey.

When

*adversus Judaïsmum aliquid in conversatione reprehendendum existimavit, passivum scilicet convictum, postmodum et ipse usu omnibus omnia futurus, ut omnes lucraretur, Judæis quasi Judæus, et eis qui sub lege, tanquam sub lege: tu illam solius conversationis placituræ postea accusatori suo reprehensionem suspectam vis haberi etiam de prædicationis erga Deum prævaricatione?*'

<sup>1</sup> Within these few years however, the opinion appears to have met with a more favourable reception.

<sup>m</sup> That Christianity was totally unknown in Galatia, before St. Paul's first visit, I will not assert: but, as St. Paul in his Epistle to the Galatians treats them as his own spiritual children, we must consider their conversion as owing in a great measure, if not principally, to St. Paul,



When he left the Galatians he was accompanied by several brethren, namely, by Silas (or Silvanus), ch. xv. 40. by Timothy, ch. xvi. 3. and perhaps by others. This circumstance is particularly to be noted. They travelled through Mysia to Troas, ver. 8. where St. Paul had a remarkable dream, which induced him to go into Macedonia. Before he left Troas St. Luke was added to St. Paul's other companions, and in their company he travelled to Philippi, ver. 11. 12. where he preached the Gospel, ver. 13—40. and thence to Thessalonica, ch. xvii. 1—9. Here some of the brethren appear to have left St. Paul, and he travelled with Silas alone to Berea, ver. 10. When he was no longer in safety here, he left Silas behind him and went to Athens, so that when he arrived in that city, none of the brethren were with him, in whose company he had travelled from Galatia.

Now St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians is written not only in his own name, but in the name of all the brethren, who were with him<sup>a</sup>. Who then were these brethren? Were they known or unknown to the Galatians? St. Paul would hardly have written to them in the name of all the brethren, who were with him, without determining who those brethren were, unless they had been the same, who attended him when he left Galatia, and who therefore were known to the Galatians without any further description. Consequently this Epistle must have been written before St. Paul separated from these brethren, that is, before he left Thessalonica. Whether it was written *in* this city, or before he arrived there, I will not attempt to determine<sup>o</sup>: but it certainly was written during the interval which elapsed between  
St.

<sup>a</sup> Gal. I. 1. 2.

<sup>o</sup> Perhaps on his journey. For it was his usual practice to send salutations at the end of his Epistles from the Christian communities established in the places where he wrote. But at the end of his Epistle to the Galatians he has sent no salutations: and therefore it is probable that he wrote neither at Philippi, nor at Thessalonica, but in a place where no Christian society had been formed.



St. Paul's departure from Galatia, and his departure from Theſſalonica.

There are likewiſe other circumſtances, which confirm this opinion, and ſhew at leaſt that St. Paul wrote to the Galatians ſoon after their converſion. For ch. i. 6. he ſays, 'I marvel that ye are *ſo ſoon* removed from him, that called you into the grace of Chriſt, unto another Goſpel!' This Epistle therefore was certainly not written ſo late as Mill, or even ſo late, as Benſon ſuppoſes. Further, it appears from Acts xv. 1. that Aſia Minor ſwarmed at that time with zealots, who wiſhed to impoſe on the Chriſtians the obſervance of the Levitical law: the ſeduction of the Galatians therefore, of which St. Paul complains in his Epistle, may be more eaſily referred to that, than to a later period. Again, St. Paul in the two firſt chapters gives the Galatians a general review of his life and conduct from his converſion to the Apoſtolic council in Jeruſalem, and at the furtheſt to his return to Antioch. Here he breaks off his narrative. It is probable therefore, that from that time to the time of his writing to the Galatians, nothing remarkable had happened except their converſion. Laſtly, the ſuppoſition that St. Paul wrote to the Galatians at the period, which I have aſſigned, accounts more eaſily than any other, for St. Paul's mentioning to the Galatians that he had not obliged Titus to undergo the rite of circumciſion: namely, becauſe he had obliged Timothy to ſubmit to it, immediately before his firſt viſit to the Galatians<sup>p</sup>, and St. Paul's adverſaries had appealed perhaps to this fact, in ſupport of their doctrine, that the Levitical law ſhould be retained.

The particular year of the Chriſtian Era, in which the Epistle to the Galatians was written, it is difficult to determine with precision: though we are eſpecially intereſted in the date of this Epistle, becauſe it appears from ch. iv. 10. that the Galatians were on the point of celebrating the Jewiſh ſabbatical year, and, in conſequence of their ſeduction by the Jewiſh zealots, of leaving their  
lands

<sup>p</sup> Acts xvi. 3.

lands uncultivated for a whole year, though the law of Moses on this article could not possibly extend to Galatia. At the beginning of the second chapter, there is a date, from which some commentators have attempted to fix the year, in which this Epistle was written. Namely, St. Paul says, ch. ii. 1. *επειτα δια δεκατεσσαρων ετων παλιν ανεβην εις Ιεροσολυμα.* But the difficulty is to determine from what period St. Paul reckoned these fourteen years. Some reckon from the time of his conversion: others from that journey to Jerusalem, which he mentions ch. i. 18. and thus make St. Paul's arrival in Jerusalem, ch. ii. 1. to have happened seventeen years after his conversion. And even if this point were settled, the year of St. Paul's conversion will still remain to be decided<sup>a</sup>. Some commentators conjecture, that St. Paul was converted in the year 35. On this hypothesis the Epistle to the Galatians, which was evidently written soon after the council in Jerusalem, must be referred to the year 49 or the year 52, according as we add 14, or 14+3 to 35. Other commentators place St. Paul's conversion in the year 38. On this latter hypothesis therefore the Epistle to the Galatians will be referred, either to 52 or to 55. But it could not be written so late as 55, because St. Paul's imprisonment in Jerusalem took place in the year 60, and I have already shewn<sup>r</sup>, that between his first journey into Macedonia, on which he wrote his Epistle to the Galatians, and his imprisonment in Jerusalem, there must have elapsed an interval of more than five years. Since therefore neither the year of St. Paul's conversion can be determined with any precision, nor the period decided, from which he counted the fourteen years, which he has mentioned Gal. ii. 1. we shall not be able from this date to fix the time, when the Epistle was written.

I have observed in the beginning of the preceding paragraph, that the Galatians, when St. Paul wrote his Epistle to them, were on the point of celebrating the Jewish sabbatical year. If therefore this sabbatical year could

<sup>a</sup> See above, Ch. viii. Sect. 4.

<sup>r</sup> Ib.

could be determined, we might settle at once the date of our Epistle. But here again a difficulty presents itself; for we are not certain in what manner the Jews reckoned their sabbatical years<sup>a</sup>: whether they constantly adhered to the seventh year, and thus made the eighth sabbatical year fall in the 56th year from the time they began to count; or whether, when they began a new reckoning with the year of Jubilee, or the 50th year, and placed the next sabbatical year in the 57th. Further we know not with what year the Jews began their new series after their return from the captivity: whether they began to reckon immediately from the time of their arrival in Palestine, or whether they waited till their lands were in a state of general cultivation. In the first book of the Maccabees, ch. vi. 53. mention is made of a sabbatical year, the only one on record in the Jewish history. This sabbatical year corresponds to the year 150 of the Greeks, and 161 before Christ. Now if we begin to reckon with 160 before Christ, and adopt the opinion that the Jews constantly adhered to the seventh year, we shall find that the year 50 after Christ was a sabbatical year: for 160 and 50 make 210 which is exactly 30 times 7. But in fact we should begin to reckon a year earlier: for the passage in the book of the Maccabees relates to the latter half of the sabbatical year, when the want of a harvest occasioned a famine. Consequently this sabbatical year began in the year 162 before Christ: and therefore the year 49 after Christ is properly the thirtieth sabbatical year from that time. Now the date 49 agrees with another calculation of the year when the Epistle to the Galatians was written, as appears from the preceding paragraph: and the coincidence of these two calculations is a circumstance in favour of both. The preceding calculation from sabbatical years will indeed fall to the ground, if it be true that the Jews began a new reckoning with each Jubilee: but as our present question does not admit perhaps of an

<sup>a</sup> See the Orient. Bib. Vol. X. p. 17—25.



an absolute decision, the year 49 may be proposed, as the most probable date of the Epistle to the Galatians<sup>t</sup>.

I will not tire the reader with an examination of what other critics have advanced on this subject, since the task has been already performed by Lardner<sup>u</sup>: but shall mention only what the various opinions are. 1. The first is, that it was written during St. Paul's visit in Corinth, Acts xviii. 1. and (as is assumed without authority) in the year 51 or 52. This is the opinion, which Lardner adopts. 2dly. That it was written at Ephesus, Acts xviii. 23. 24. 3dly. At the same time; that the Epistle to the Romans was written, Acts xx. 2. 4. 4thly. That it was written at Rome. This last opinion is the most improbable of any: for if St. Paul had deferred it till his arrival at Rome, he could not have complained in the Epistle, that the Galatians had *so soon* wavered in their faith, nor would he have been silent on his bonds in Rome, of which we find no traces in the whole Epistle. Yet this opinion, strange as it is, is advanced in the subscription to this Epistle in the Greek manuscripts<sup>w</sup>, and in the Syriac and Arabic versions. From this example alone we may learn, that the subscriptions annexed to the Epistles are entitled to no credit.

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## S E C T. II.

### *Of the Galatian Christians, and their seducers.*

**T**HE Galatians were descended from a tribe of Gauls who had formerly invaded Greece, and afterwards settled in the lesser Asia. Their original Gaulish language they retained even so late as the fifth century, as appears

<sup>t</sup> Probably likewise in the autumn, or at the time, when in other years, the land was tilled; but in the sabbatical year remained fallow.

<sup>u</sup> Supplement, Vol. II. ch. xii.

<sup>w</sup> Προς Γαλατας εγγραφη απο Ρωμης.



appears from the testimony of Jerom, who relates that their dialect was nearly the same with that of the Treviri\*. At the same time they spoke the Greek language, in common with almost all the inhabitants of the lesser Asia: and therefore St. Paul's Greek Epistle was perfectly intelligible to them.

John Joachim Schmidt, master of the grammar school at Ilfeld, has endeavoured, in his *Prolusio de Galatis*, ad quos Paulus literas misit, to support the extraordinary opinion, that the Galatians to whom St. Paul wrote, did not reside within the limits of the country of Galatia, but were the inhabitants of Derbe and Lystra, which, though really cities of Lycaonia, were considered as an appendage to Galatia, because they had been presented by Augustus to Amyntas, King of Galatia. But since St. Paul preached the Gospel in Galatia itself, as well as at Derbe and Lystra, I can see no reason for taking the term 'Galatians' in St. Paul's Epistle, in any other than its proper acceptation. Schmidt indeed contends<sup>v</sup>, not only that St. Paul was never in Galatia before the council at Jerusalem, which I readily grant, but likewise that the persons, whom St. Paul calls Galatians were already converted to Christianity, when that council was held. This position he endeavours to prove from Gal. ii. 5. where St. Paul says, 'To whom we gave place by subjection, no not for an hour, that the truth of the Gospel might *continue* with you.' But by the term 'you' St. Paul might mean the Heathens in general, whose cause he pleaded at Jerusalem, in opposition to those, who wished to enforce the Levitical law: at least he has frequently used the term in this sense, and if this may be ascribed to it in the place in question, the argument will

\* Galatas, excepto sermone Græco, quo omnis loquitur Oriens, propriam linguam eandem pene habere, quam Treviri: nec referre, si aliqua exinde corruperint, quum et Aphri Phœnicum linguam nonnulla ex parte mutaverint, et ipsa Latinitas et regionibus quotidie mutetur, et tempore. T. IV. p. 256. ed. Benedict. On this subject Jerom is very good authority: for he had spent some time at Treves, and therefore was well able to judge of the language of the Treviri.

will prove nothing of any one community in particular. Further, that by the term 'you' St. Paul meant the inhabitants of Derbe and Lystra is highly improbable, because it appears from Acts xvi. 1. that he not only visited those cities soon after the council at Jerusalem, but informed them verbally of the result of this council: consequently, he was under no necessity of giving them written information. On the other hand, if he had judged it necessary to write to them, after verbal information, he would at least have given some hint in his Epistle, that what he then wrote to them he had formerly delivered in person<sup>z</sup>.

The seducers, against whom St. Paul writes in his Epistle to the Galatians, were men of a very different description from the weak brethren, of whom he speaks in his Epistle to the Romans ch. *xiv.* *xv.* and other places; and whose errors he censures in so gentle a manner, as even to recommend an abstinence in their presence from whatever they imagined to be unlawful. These weak brethren anxiously abstained from meats offered to idols, and from blood: considering a participation of the former as a violation of natural, as well as of the Mosaic religion, and a participation of the latter, as an infringement on the command given not only to the Jews in particular, but to the descendants of Noah in general, Gen. *ix.* 4. It was out of tenderness to these weak brethren, that the council in Jerusalem had commanded an abstinence from meats offered to idols, and from blood: and it was the same motive, which induced St. Paul in several passages, for instance, Rom. *xiv.* *xv.* 1 Cor. *viii.* *x.* to recommend the same abstinence, whenever such persons were present. Beside these two articles, it does not appear that they insisted on any other of the Mosaic institutions, except the observance of the Jewish sabbath,

<sup>z</sup> To these objections Schmidt has replied in a Programm published in 1754 with the following title; *Prolusionem suam de Galatis—ab objectionibus doctissimorum virorum vindicare conatur*: which the reader may consult, if he wishes to determine, whether the objections are fully answered.

sabbath<sup>a</sup>, which however, as far as we have any knowledge of this matter, they did not consider as indispensably necessary for the converts from Heathenism. But the seducers or disturbers of the Galatians went much greater lengths, and maintained the necessity of observing the whole of the Levitical law, including not only circumcision, and an abstinence from all meats deemed unclean, but also an observance of all the Jewish festivals, and even of the sabbatical year, which was never designed to be observed in any other country than Palestine. It appears that they began their reformation with exercising the rite of circumcision: and therefore St. Paul warns the Galatians, ch. v. 2. 3. not to submit to it, because by this ceremony they would profess themselves to be Jews, and therefore lay themselves under the obligations of the Jewish law. Persons of a similar description with those, who disturbed the Galatians, had disquieted the Christians in Antioch, till they were silenced by the Apostles and Elders in Jerusalem. They were Jews of the New Pharisaic sect, founded by Judas Galilæus, a sect which in various points differed from the ancient Pharisees<sup>b</sup>. The Apostle speaks of them not only in the Epistle to the Galatians, ch. ii. 4. v. 10. 11. vi. 12. 13. but likewise in his Epistle to the Philippians, ch. i. 16. iii. 2. 18. 19.: and he describes them as men of really bad characters, whose principal object was to enrich themselves at the expence of those, whom they pretended to convert. Nor is the picture which St. Paul has drawn of them in the least exaggerated: for it appears from the accounts of Josephus, that he might have justly represented them in a still more odious light. It was in fact this sect, which involved the Jewish nation in that war, which ended with the destruction of Jerusalem, for they incited their countrymen to disobedience against the Roman Emperor, and to a refusal of the accustomed tribute. Under the mask of piety they committed

<sup>a</sup> Rom. xiv. 4. 5.

<sup>b</sup> See the Mosaic Law, § 184, where I have given an extract from Josephus, relative to this sect.



committed rapine and murder, even within the walls of the temple: and their impetuosity was such, that they respected not the power of the Romans, but provoked them to open hostilities. They not only introduced themselves into the Christian communities, but pretended to preach even the Christian religion, as appears from the Epistles to the Galatians and Ephesians. The old Pharisaic sect, as it existed in the time of Christ, encompassed sea and land to make one proselyte<sup>c</sup>, not because they wished to promote religion and virtue, but because they expected to be amply repaid for their mission. Josephus<sup>d</sup> has related a remarkable instance of four Jews, who had persuaded Fulvia, a Roman lady of rank and fortune, to adopt their religion, and extorted from her considerable sums, as presents for the holy temple, which, instead of sending to Jerusalem, they retained in their own coffers: till the matter became publickly known, and was at length reported to Tiberius, who immediately ordered the Jews to leave Rome, and sent four thousand of them to Sardinia. As soon as the Christian religion began to spread itself among the Gentiles, and every where met with a favourable reception, they found their advantage in preaching Christianity, which they taught, as if it were nothing more than a reformed Judaism, and therefore they strictly enjoined the rite of circumcision. In this manner they endeavoured to make the Christians become partly Jews, and by placing them as it were in the middle between the two religions, they acquired an opportunity of completing the conversion, as soon as circumstances, and their own profits, would permit.

St. Paul therefore in his Epistle to the Galatians speaks of their seducers in severer terms, than he has used on other occasions, especially in ch. i. 8. 9. It may be said indeed that, as this Epistle was the first which St. Paul wrote, the fire of youth is more conspicuous in this, than in any other: and that, since it was written with his own hand, not dictated according to his

<sup>c</sup> Math. xxviii. 15.

<sup>d</sup> Antiquit. xviii. 3. 5.



his subsequent practice, the Apostle more easily gave way to the suggestions of his naturally warm disposition. But if we reflect that the seducers of the Galatians were men of a different description from the weak brethren, whom he describes in other places, he might have used the same severity of expression, at whatever time, and under whatever circumstances he wrote. In fact the propagation of Christianity could have met with no greater impediment, than that, which these persons had thrown in its way : for they not only clogged the religion of Christ with ceremonies which were become obsolete, but taught the observance of them as the true means of obtaining eternal salvation. Of those who thus adopt the Levitical law, St. Paul very properly says, ch. v. 2. ‘ Behold, I Paul say unto you that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing, and ver. 4. Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law ; ye are fallen from grace’ <sup>e</sup>. Nor is the Epistle to the Galatians the only one, in which St. Paul has severely reprimanded those, who insisted on the Levitical law as the means of salvation : for we find examples in the Epistle to the Romans, ch. xvi. 17. 18. 20. and in that to the Philippians, ch. iii. 2. 18. 19. The Apostles also and Elders assembled in council at Jerusalem, represented those, who taught the necessity of circumcising the Gentile converts, as men who subverted the Souls of the Christians <sup>f</sup>.

The principal arguments, used by the seducers of the Galatians, were the following.

1. ‘ That the Apostles at Jerusalem, especially St. Peter, and likewise the whole church at Jerusalem, considered circumcision as necessary : that St. Paul was only a deputy from that church, and that his doctrine was authoritative only so far, as it agreed with the doctrine of the church of Jerusalem.’ That the former part of this assertion

<sup>e</sup> It is evident that St. Paul did not mean to include those, who retained circumcision, merely through weakness of understanding, or a false tenderness of conscience.

<sup>f</sup> Ανασκευάζοντες τὰς ψυχὰς ὑμῶν. Acts xv. 24.

assertion is false, appears both from Acts xv. 24. and from the two first chapters of the Epistle to the Galatians. And that the latter part is equally false appears from the same Epistle, where St. Paul shews at large, that he was neither a missionary from the church at Jerusalem, nor a disciple of the Apostles, but an immediate Apostle of Christ himself, that the Gospel, which he preached, was delivered to him by a divine revelation, and that its truth therefore by no means depended on its agreement with what the other Apostles taught. It was absolutely necessary that St. Paul should be explicit on this subject, because, Galatia being at some distance from Palestine, the inhabitants of that country could be the more easily deceived in respect to the doctrines, which were taught by the Apostles and Elders in Jerusalem.

2. 'That St. Paul had altered his opinion, and now preached the Levitical law.' Galat. i. 8. 10. v. 11. Perhaps they pleaded in support of this argument that St. Paul had ordered Timothy to be circumcised shortly before his first visit to the Galatians. Acts xvi. 3. compared with Galat. ii. 3.

3. 'That all the promises of God were made to the posterity of Abraham, and that whoever would partake of the blessing upon Abraham, must like Abraham be circumcised. This objection St. Paul answers, ch. iii. 7—iv. 18.

4. 'That Isaiah had foretold an approaching conversion of the Gentiles, and had promised children from among the Heathen to Jerusalem or Sion. If therefore the Gentiles desired to be children of Jerusalem they ought to conform to the worship and ceremonies of that church.' In answer to this argument, St. Paul shews ch. iv. 9—31. that these children were promised, not to the Jewish, but to the ancient Jerusalem, where the true God was worshipped in the time of Melchisedek, without either temple or Levitical law.

There are two passages in the Epistle to the Galatians, ch. ii. 14. iv. 12. which seem to imply, that not only  
St.

St. Paul, but even St. Peter, when they were in company with heathens totally disregarded the Levitical law, and partook of meats, which the Jews considered as unclean. It is true that this was no crime, since the Levitical law had ceased to be binding: yet it was contrary to St. Paul's practice at other times, for as a native Jew, he himself still observed the law. He even made the Nazarite vow, shaved his head at Cenchreæ, and then went up to Jerusalem to celebrate the approaching festival and make the usual offerings<sup>g</sup>: and a few years afterwards, when he was at Jerusalem for the last time, he repeated the Nazarite ceremonies<sup>h</sup>, in order to convince the Jews, as is expressly said, Acts xxi. 24. that he 'walked orderly and kept the law.' It may be asked therefore whether St. Peter and St. Paul observed at one time, but disregarded at another, the Levitical law, according to the difference of the circumstances, in which they were placed<sup>i</sup>. Tertullian, as appears from the passage quoted at the beginning of the preceding section, answers this question in the affirmative. But I would rather answer it in the negative, and assert that both St. Peter and St. Paul abstained in general from unclean meats, even when in company with heathens. In fact I cannot suppose, that any man, who had invited them into his house, could have violated the laws of hospitality in such a manner, as to present them with meats, of which they as native Jews were not accustomed to partake. St. Peter especially, who paid great respect to the Jewish ceremonies<sup>k</sup>, would have carefully avoided a participation, which must have offended his countrymen, and consequently have diminished his own importance among them. And St. Paul had so many enemies among the Jews, that, if in his own conduct he had openly violated the

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<sup>g</sup> Acts xviii. 18. 20. 21. 22.

<sup>h</sup> Acts xxi. 20—27. xxiv. 17. 18.

<sup>i</sup> This question relates merely to the manner, in which themselves acted on different occasions: and is very different from the question, whether they taught different doctrines at different times.

<sup>k</sup> Acts x. xi.



the Levitical law, they would not have neglected to charge him with this violation, when he was publicly accused at Jerusalem and Cæsarea. Yet in Acts xxiii. 1—10. xxiv. 1—21. we meet with no charge of any such kind. I believe therefore that the two passages above quoted from the Epistle to the Galatians imply, not that St. Peter and St. Paul partook of unclean meats in company with heathens, but merely that they did not refuse to associate at table with heathens, and to eat in their houses, which the Jews in general avoided<sup>1</sup>, even if nothing was produced which was contrary to their law. For the vessels themselves, in which the food was prepared, they considered as unclean: nor were they certain that among the various ingredients there was no intermixture of something forbidden. Hence St. Paul himself says, Galat. vi. 13. that the circumcised themselves did not observe every tittle of the law, signifying, as I understand the passage, that the Jews neither did nor could observe the strict letter of the law, when they resided in heathen countries.

Some writers have concluded from the Epistle to the Galatians, that St. Peter and St. Paul were not agreed as to the necessity of retaining the Levitical law, but on the contrary, that they taught very different doctrines on this subject. Now it is true, that in one instance, St. Peter, to avoid giving offence to the Jews, withdrew himself from the Gentile converts at Antioch: yet the Epistle to the Galatians is so far from proving that St. Peter thought differently from St. Paul in respect to the Levitical law, that it shews they entertained the very same sentiments. This further appears from Acts x. xi. xv. and from what St. Peter himself has written in his first Epistle.

<sup>1</sup> Acts x. 28. *Ἀθεμιτον εἰνὶ ἀνδρὶ Ἰουδαίῳ κολλησθαι ἢ προσερχεσθαι ἑτεροφυλῶ.*



## C H A P. XII.

## OF THE TWO EPISTLES TO THE THESSALONIANS.

## S E C T. I.

*Of the time when St. Paul wrote his first Epistle to the Thessalonians.*

THE two Epistles to the Thessalonians are the next in point of chronology to the Epistle to the Galatians, Thessalonica, originally called Thermæ, till its name was changed by Philip in consequence of a victory over the Thessalians, was in the time of St. Paul the capital of Macedonia. In this city was a very numerous colony of Jews, and their synagogue was so celebrated, that St. Luke<sup>m</sup> calls it by way of eminence ἡ συναγωγή, or, the synagogue; and even to this very day Salonike, as the place is now called, abounds with Jewish families. Now as the Jews were the first persecutors of christianity, we see the reason why the Thessalonian community was more exposed to persecution, than any other.

St. Paul preached the Gospel at Thessalonica, after he had taught at Philippi<sup>n</sup>, and in the same year, in which he wrote his Epistle to the Galatians. Some few among the Jews received the Gospel, and the Apostle endeavoured to prove to them the truth of Christianity from the prophecies of the Old Testament°. But a great number of the heathens, who, though they had not been circumcised, had learned to worship the one true God, and are therefore called σεβομενοι Ἕλληνες, became converts to Christ. Hence the majority of this church consisted of native heathens, who had formerly been idolaters<sup>p</sup>; and it is not improbable that Christianity had been propagated even among the idolatrous heathens. The Jews,

<sup>m</sup> Acts xvii. 1.<sup>n</sup> Acts xvii. 1.

° Ver. 2—4.

<sup>p</sup> 1 Theff. i. 9.

Jews, ever jealous of the admission of the Gentiles to the same privileges with themselves, were highly offended with the Apostle's conduct, and raised therefore such a disturbance, that St. Paul and Silas were obliged to quit Thessalonica after a residence of only three weeks. Not content with driving St. Paul from Thessalonica, before the Christian community was thoroughly established, they carried their malice so far as to follow him even to Berea: which place they obliged him likewise to quit and to fly to Athens. Silas and Timothy staid behind at Berea, but they received orders from St. Paul to follow him as soon as possible<sup>a</sup>: and at Athens St. Paul waited for them<sup>c</sup>. Their actual arrival there is not mentioned by St. Luke<sup>d</sup>: but that they really came thither to St. Paul appears from 1 Thess. iii. 1. 2. Timothy however staid only a short time with St. Paul, who sent him back to Thessalonica<sup>e</sup>: and before Timothy's return St. Paul had left Athens, and was gone to Corinth, whither Timothy followed him<sup>f</sup>.

Now as St. Paul has mentioned in his first Epistle to the Thessalonians, not only Timothy's departure to Thessalonica, but likewise his return<sup>g</sup>, it follows that this Epistle was written, not at Athens, as the subscription imports, but at Corinth, where St. Paul spent a year and a half. I once thought it probable that the Epistle was written during the former part of this period: but it appears to me at present, that he wrote it rather in the latter part of this interval, after he had made several excursions from Corinth. St. Paul says to the Thessalonians, ch. i. 7. that their conduct was such, as made them an example for all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia, and ver. 7. 8. 9. he adds, 'For from you founded out the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia

<sup>a</sup> Acts xvii. 14. 15.

<sup>c</sup> Acts xvii. 16.

<sup>d</sup> St. Luke's silence in respect to this matter is not extraordinary, because he was not present with St. Paul at Athens, having staid behind at Philippi. See above, ch. vi. sect. 3.

<sup>e</sup> 1 Thess. iii. 1—5.

<sup>f</sup> Acts xviii. 5.

<sup>g</sup> 1 Thess. iii. 1—6.

Macedonia and Achaia, but alſo in every place your faith in God is ſpread abroad, ſo that we need not ſpeak any thing: for they themſelves ſhew of us what reception we had with you, and how ye turned to God from idols, to ſerve the living and true God, and to wait for his ſon,\* &c. From this paſſage we muſt conclude that St. Paul had been in various places, after he had founded the church at Theſſalonica: and it is not improbable, that during the year and an half above-mentioned he made ſeveral excuſions from Corinth, one of which was perhaps to the iſland of Crete, as I ſhall endeavour to ſhew in the chapter, which relates to the Epistle to Titus. Further, in ch. ii. 17. 18. he ſays, ‘But we, brethren, being taken from you a ſhort time in preſence, and in heart, endeavoured the more abundantly to ſee your face with great deſire. Wherefore, we would have come unto you, even I Paul, once and again, but Satan hindered us.’ Since therefore St. Paul had ſeveral times formed a reſolution of reſiſiting Theſſalonica, and had ſeveral times been prevented<sup>x</sup>, it is evident that this Epistle was written, neither ſoon after St. Paul’s arrival at Corinth, nor even ſoon after Timothy had arrived there from Macedonia. The particular year of the Chriſtian Era I cannot pretend to determine: for theſe determinations, as I have already obſerved<sup>y</sup>, are very precarious. But if the Epistle to the Galatians was written at the end of the year 49, the firſt Epistle to the Theſſalonians was written probably about the year 51.

\* By what accidents he had been prevented St. Paul does not ſay: but as during the courſe of his life he thrice ſuffered ſhipwreck (2 Cor. xi. 25.) it is not impoſſible that one of them happened in the interval, which elapſed between his departure from Theſſalonica and the writing of his firſt Epistle to the Theſſalonians.

<sup>y</sup> Ch. xi. Sect. 1.

## S E C T. II.

*Of the circumstances of the Church at Thessalonica.*

THE principal circumstances of the Christian community at Thessalonica, as far as is necessary to a right understanding of St. Paul's two Epistles, are the following.

It consisted, as was mentioned in the preceding section, for the most part of Gentile, and of some few Jewish converts. As it is hardly credible, that St. Paul at his departure appointed those to be teachers, who only three weeks before were wholly unacquainted with revealed religion, it is probable that the teachers mentioned ch. v. 12. were converts from Judaism, or at least such Greeks, as had already embraced the Jewish religion.

2. The newly founded community had made indeed some progress in the faith : but being still in an imperfect state, and oppressed by the powerful Jews at Thessalonica, it was in some danger, and stood in need therefore of fresh support, to enable them to stand firm in the doctrine, which they had embraced. This support the Apostle gives them in the three first chapters of the first Epistle, and endeavours to convince them, both by his own conduct, and by the imparted gifts of the Holy Ghost, that the Gospel which he preached, was true in itself, and of divine origin.

3. There prevailed an error, relative to the doctrine of the last judgement, which might have created great confusion in this community. The Thessalonians, like most of the primitive Christians, supposed that the day of judgement was not far distant, and that it would happen in the age, in which they themselves lived. Further, they imagined that they who survived this day, would have a great advantage over those, who were deceased : which was probably to consist in their entering  
immediately



immediately into the Millennium, of which some of the primitive Christians entertained very strange notions. And on this account they lamented the death of their friends, as they supposed that it deprived them of privileges to be enjoyed by those, who were alive and remained on earth at the general judgement. This error St. Paul endeavours to remove in the latter part of the fourth chapter. In the second Epistle, ch. ii. 2. we find an intimation, that not only Epistles were forged in St. Paul's name, to propagate this error, but that certain calculations and false prophecies were also applied to the same purpose. With respect to the false prophecies, I shall not venture to hazard even a conjecture, for it is very possible that they were merely verbal, and never committed to writing: and therefore all that I have said in the first edition, on the Revelation of Cerinthus, I here retract. But of the calculation, of which St. Paul speaks, and which he terms *λογος*, I believe the true meaning to be, as follows. The Jews in general believed that the Messiah would erect a temporal kingdom, in which they were to enjoy liberty and rest: and of this kingdom they considered their sabbath as a type<sup>z</sup>. Hence they concluded, that it must commence at least as early as the beginning of the sixth Millennium from the creation of the world: and they thought it not improbable, that it would begin much sooner. For as the most devout Jews did not wait till sun set, but began their sabbath and abstinence from labour several hours before, so they imagined that the Deity would begin the great sabbath several hours, that is centuries, before the six thousand years from the creation were expired. It is true that according to the Chronology of the Hebrew Bible, as the text now stands in our manuscripts, the end of the sixth Millennium was so far removed, that even after a deduction of several centuries,

<sup>z</sup> It would be foreign to the present purpose, to inquire, whether this notion were grounded or not. It will be sufficient to observe that the most learned Jews of the present age reject it, though several modern Christians, especially Vitringa, have retained it.

centuries, no man in the time of St. Paul could expect to survive it. But every one knows that there are considerable variations in respect to the years mentioned in the book of Genesis: which make the creation of the world to have taken place at an earlier period, than it is made in our Hebrew Bibles. In the Septuagint, the number of years mentioned in the fifth and eleventh chapters of Genesis, is such as advance the duration of the world, in the time of St. Paul, far into the sixth Millennium; but how far I will not attempt to determine, for not all the copies even of the Septuagint have the same numbers in the eleventh chapter of Genesis, as may be seen on comparing the editions of Grabe and Breitinger, which follow the Codex Alexandrinus, with the editions which contain the text of the Codex Vaticanus. Further, the very uncertainty, which attended the calculation, gave the greater scope to the imagination of enthusiasts, to fix the commencement of the seventh Millennium, and of the temporal kingdom which they expected, at a period the most suitable to their wishes. And, if the world at that time had really existed above 5500 years, they had some ground for concluding, according to their principles, that the grand Millennium was not far distant. These notions insinuated themselves very early among the Christians: and they were received not only by the Thessalonians, but by several of the ancient fathers.

4. Among the converts at Thessalonica, there were several, who refused to subject themselves to the teachers, and, under the pretence of edifying others, behaved themselves disorderly. These persons St. Paul had in view, 1 Theff. v. 11—14.

The second Epistle to the Thessalonians was occasioned by the same motives, which induced the Apostle to write his first Epistle. As this had not produced its proper effect, and several members of the Thessalonian community still maintained that the day of judgement was at hand, and others continued their disorderly conduct, the Apostle thought it necessary to write to them again  
very

very soon after he had written his first Epistle. In his second Epistle therefore he endeavours to shew from some prophecies of the Old Testament not then fulfilled, that the day of judgement was not so soon to be expected : and at the same time he cautions the Thessalonians against idleness and irregularity.

It was the opinion of Grotius, that what is called the second Epistle to the Thessalonians was in fact the first Epistle, which St. Paul wrote to them. This opinion he grounds on 2 Theff. iii. 17. where the Apostle says, ‘ The salutation of Paul with mine own hand, which is the token in every Epistle : so I write.’ Hence Grotius concluded that this was the first Epistle, which St. Paul wrote to the Thessalonians, because he taught them in what manner they were to distinguish his genuine Epistles from those, which were forged in his name. But this inference is ungrounded, for a writer does not always think it necessary in the very first Epistle to give the tokens of authenticity. On the contrary, it is more probable that he would do this, after letters had been forged in his name, than at the beginning of the correspondence.

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## CHAP. XIII.

### OF THE EPISTLE TO TITUS.

#### SECT. I.

##### *Of the person and character of Titus.*

ST. PAUL's Epistle to Titus might not improperly be called an Epistle to the Cretans : for the design of it was not so much to instruct Titus in matters, which he must have known even without this Epistle, as to  
put



put into his hands an order, which he might lay before the Cretans, and to which he might appeal whenever unworthy and unqualified persons attempted to intrude into the episcopal office. The contents of this Epistle are nearly of the same kind as those of the first Epistle to Timothy. The churches in Crete were hitherto without bishops and ministers: Titus therefore was ordered to appoint them, and at the same time was cautioned against some, who were of the circumcision, and who endeavoured to procure for themselves the ecclesiastical offices <sup>a</sup>. Of the person and character of Titus we have no further knowledge, than what is related in the New Testament: from which it appears that he was by birth a heathen, that he was not circumcised <sup>b</sup>, as Timothy was, that he sometimes accompanied St. Paul, and was sometimes sent as deputy to Christian communities.

It is remarkable that St. Luke has not once mentioned the name of Titus throughout the Acts of the Apostles, though St. Paul makes frequent mention of him in his Epistles. But St. Luke's silence will cease to be extraordinary, when we consider the period, in which Titus attended St. Paul. He was present with the Apostle at three different times. First, on that journey to Jerusalem, which is described Acts xv. as St. Paul himself in his Epistle to the Galatians <sup>c</sup> relates in express terms. But in this instance, though St. Luke has not mentioned him by name, he has included him under the general expression 'several other of them' <sup>d</sup>, namely of the Gentile converts. From this period, as far as we may judge from the Epistles of St. Paul, some time must have elapsed, before Titus was again with him: but in the second Epistle to the Corinthians the name of Titus is frequently mentioned <sup>e</sup>, where it appears that he had been with St. Paul at Ephesus, and was sent from that city

<sup>a</sup> Of these ecclesiastical offices, I shall treat in the Notes to the Epistle to Titus, and to the first Epistle to Timothy.

<sup>b</sup> Gal. ii. 3.

<sup>c</sup> Ch. ii. 1. 3.

<sup>d</sup> Acts xv. 2.

<sup>e</sup> Ch. ii. 13. vii. 6. 13. 14. viii. 6. 16. 23. xii. 18.



city to Corinth. St. Paul, on his own departure from Ephesus, expected to meet Titus again at Troas : but in this expectation he was disappointed<sup>f</sup>, for he did not meet with him, till his arrival in Macedonia<sup>g</sup>, whence the Apostle sent Titus again with a new commission to Corinth. Now these engagements of Titus took place during the period in which St. Luke was absent from St. Paul<sup>h</sup>; and this is the reason why he is silent in respect to the transactions of Titus, as also of many transactions of St. Paul, which took place in this interval. When St. Luke again joined company with St. Paul, Titus does not appear to have been with him, so that these two Gentile converts attended perhaps the Apostle alternately. The third and last time, that we find Titus with St. Paul, was shortly before the second Epistle to Timothy was written, in which St. Paul says ch. iv. 10. that Titus was departed for Dalmatia. But this passage is of little importance in determining the date of the Epistle to Titus, which was certainly written long before the second Epistle to Timothy. This question, which will be examined in the following section, must be determined by the passages above quoted.

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## SECT. II.

*When and where the Epistle to Titus was written.*

CHRISTIANITY had been very early planted in Crete, though we are not certain by whom it was first introduced there : but as several Cretans were present in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, at the first effusion of the Holy Ghost<sup>i</sup>, it is not improbable that on their return they made known the Christian religion. The only instance, in which St. Luke has made any mention

<sup>f</sup> 2 Cor. ii. 12. 13.

<sup>g</sup> Ch. vii. 6. 13.

<sup>h</sup> See Vol. III. Ch. vi. Sect. 3. of this Introduction. <sup>i</sup> Acts ii. 11.

mention of a voyage of St. Paul to Crete is in Acts xxvii. 7. 8. But at that time St. Paul was on his voyage, as a prisoner, to Italy, and seems only to have touched at the island. It is true that St. Paul expressed to the Roman Centurion a wish to pass the winter there: but St. Luke has not mentioned that he went on shore, nor is it probable that the Roman centurion would have given him permission, as he was then a prisoner. With *this* voyage therefore of St. Paul to Crete the Epistle to Titus has no connexion.

But that St. Paul not only had been in the island of Crete, but had preached the Gospel there, not long before he wrote his Epistle to Titus, is evident from its contents: for St. Paul says, ch. i. 5. ‘For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things, that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee.’ Now as St. Luke has taken no notice in the Acts of the Apostles of the voyage undertaken by St. Paul to Crete, when he appointed Titus to ordain elders, we have no other means of determining the time when it happened, than a comparison of the facts mentioned in the Epistle to Titus with what we know in general of St. Paul’s travels. It is on this account that commentators are so much at variance in respect to the date of this Epistle: and I myself entertain at present a very different opinion from that, which I formerly entertained. In the first edition of this Introduction, I described the Epistle to Titus, as written after St. Paul’s imprisonment at Rome: in the second edition I wavered in this opinion: when I published the third edition, I thought it highly probable that this Epistle was written long before St. Paul’s voyage as a prisoner to Italy: and at present I have no doubt that it really was, and that in the chronological arrangement of St. Paul’s Epistles it should be placed between the second Epistle to the Thessalonians and the first Epistle to the Corinthians.

St. Paul says to Titus, ch. iii. 12. ‘When I shall send Artemas unto thee, or Tychicus, be diligent to come unto

unto me to Nicopolis: for I have determined there to winter.' Now from this passage, if we knew what Nicopolis St. Paul meant, and when he was there, the date of this Epistle would be at once decided. For St. Paul must have been either in Nicopolis, or in the neighbourhood of the place, when he wrote this Epistle, because, as there were many cities of this name, it would have been totally useless to have desired Titus to come to him to Nicopolis, unless the place, where he wrote the Epistle had determined what Nicopolis he meant.

The question therefore to be asked is: In what country did this Nicopolis lie? The Greek subscription to the Epistle is, *Εγγραφη απο Νικοπολεως της Μακεδονιας*. But this is certainly a mistake: for by Nicopolis in Macedonia, is meant the Nicopolis which was situate on the river Nessus, was distinguished from other cities of this name by the title Nicopolis ad Nessum, and belonged in fact to Thrace. But this city was built by the Emperor Trajan, and consequently did not exist in the time of St. Paul<sup>k</sup>.

Further, when St. Paul wrote the Epistle to Titus, he was just returned from a voyage: and therefore the Nicopolis, where he wrote, could not have been at a considerable distance from the sea. Hence it appears, that neither Nicopolis ad Hæmum<sup>l</sup>, nor Nicopolis ad Istrum<sup>m</sup>, could have been the place where he wrote, though the latter is understood by Theophylact<sup>n</sup>. Still less, could the Nicopolis in Armenia, or any other city of this name, in the middle of Asia Minor. Nor could St. Paul mean the Nicopolis, which was situate in Egypt, not far from Alexandria<sup>o</sup>; for, as it was contrary to St. Paul's custom to spend a considerable time in a small town, which would have circumscribed the propagation of

<sup>k</sup> See Mill's Note on the subscription to this Epistle.

<sup>l</sup> Cellarii Geograph. Tom. I. p. 1327.

<sup>m</sup> Ib. p. 583.

<sup>n</sup> In his Note to Tit. iii. 12. he says, *Ἡ δὲ Νικοπολις τῆς Θρακίας ἐστὶ, τῷ Ἰσθμῷ ἐπικειμένη.*

<sup>o</sup> Cellarii Africa, p. 14.



of the Gospel, he would have passed the winter at Alexandria, if he had been in Egypt, rather than at a small town in its neighbourhood.

Of all the cities, which bore the name of Nicopolis, the most celebrated is that which lay in Epire, opposite to the promontory of Actium, and was built by Augustus in honour of his victory over Antony. This is the Nicopolis, which in my opinion St. Paul meant. But there were two other cities of this name, the one in Bithynia<sup>p</sup>, the other in Cilicia<sup>q</sup>, which were not inconveniently situated, if St. Paul set sail from Ephesus, when he went into Crete, and returned from Crete into Asia Minor: and therefore these two cities must not be passed over in the present inquiry.

Before I proceed, I must observe, that St. Luke, in the Acts of the Apostles, is equally silent in respect to St. Paul's visit to Nicopolis, as on his voyage to Crete. For this reason many commentators have supposed, that both the one and the other happened at a period subsequent to the close of St. Luke's history, and consequently after the end of St. Paul's imprisonment in Rome. To this opinion however Lardner has made the following objection<sup>r</sup>, which I do not think of sufficient weight to overturn it, though I do not defend the opinion itself. Namely he objects, that St. Paul, after he was released from his imprisonment in Rome, had attained too great an age to be able to undertake any new work, and that after that period he probably confined himself to the edification of those churches, which he had already established. But to this objection it may be replied, that if St. Paul was able to travel into countries, where he had already preached the Gospel, he was equally able to travel into countries where he had not preached the Gospel: and that, though greater exertions are requisite to convert heathens to Christianity, than to confirm in the faith those who are already Christians, yet, as St. Paul was endued with the  
power

<sup>p</sup> Cellarii Geograph. Tom. II. p. 308.

<sup>q</sup> *Ib.* p. 260.

<sup>r</sup> Supplement, Vol. II. p. 168.



power of working miracles, the deficiency of natural vigour in an advanced state of life might have been supplied by his supernatural endowments. A more important objection might be made from the circumstance, that the interval, between St. Paul's release from his first imprisonment in Rome and the commencement of his second imprisonment, was too short to admit of this voyage. St. Paul was probably released from his first imprisonment, about the beginning of the year 65<sup>s</sup>; in the year 66, he was beheaded, and he was already returned to Rome some time before the winter, at least in the month of August. Now in this interval he is said to have travelled to Philippi, into Asia Minor, to Colossæ, and even to Jerusalem. There is hardly any time left therefore for a voyage into Crete; especially as St. Paul was already returned from that island before the winter, that is, according to this hypothesis, the winter of 65, which he intended to pass at Nicopolis, as he himself says in the Epistle to Titus, ch. iii. 12. I admit however that this objection will lose a part of its weight, if St. Paul's martyrdom, the time of which has never been fixed with chronological accuracy, took place one or two years later than the year which is usually assigned.

But, in respect to the main point, I accede to the opinion of Lardner, and of those writers whom he has quoted in support of it: and I see at present no necessity for referring St. Paul's voyage to Crete to a period subsequent to the close of the Acts of the Apostles, merely because St. Luke has passed it over in silence. For it is certain that St. Paul undertook several voyages, previous to the last voyage described by St. Luke, as appears from what St. Paul himself says in his second Epistle to the Corinthians, which was written soon after his departure from Ephesus mentioned Acts xx. 1. In this Epistle, ch. xi. 25. he tells the Corinthians, that he had thrice suffered shipwreck: of which St. Luke has given no account in his narrative. Now it is not improbable, that

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<sup>s</sup> See Ch. xxi. Sect. 2.

one of the voyages was the voyage made by St. Paul to Crete. I have already shewn that St. Luke was absent from St. Paul during the whole of that period, which extends from Acts xvii. 1. to ch. xx. 6. in which interval he has omitted several important facts, to which St. Paul alludes in his Epistles. Among these facts may not improbably be reckoned St. Paul's voyage to Crete, and his subsequent visit to Nicopolis. When the Apostle came to Corinth the second time, and there wrote his Epistle to the Romans, he must have already preached the Gospel in Epire: for he says in this Epistle, ch. xv. 19. 'round about unto Illyricum I have fully preached the Gospel of Christ.' Since therefore it appears from the Epistle to Titus, that when St. Paul wrote to Titus, his intention was to pass the winter in Nicopolis, we may not unreasonably suppose, that this was the winter, in which he propagated Christianity throughout Epire and Illyricum.

I therefore not only abandon the opinion, that the Epistle to Titus was written after St. Paul's imprisonment in Rome, in conformity with the sentiments of Lardner and other eminent critics, but I venture to go even a step further, and to place it in point of time before the second Epistle to the Corinthians, because in this last-mentioned Epistle St. Paul alludes to several voyages, which are omitted by St. Luke. That the reader may be enabled to judge of the probability or improbability of this assertion, I will state the passages in that period of St. Paul's life, when St. Luke was absent from him, to which we may refer the Apostle's voyage to Crete, and the winter, which on his return from that Island he passed in Nicopolis, without violating the order of St. Luke's narrative. These passages are three in number, namely:

1. St. Paul spent a year and a half at Corinth, Acts xviii. 11. From this place he might have made an excursion to Crete, for we must not suppose that he spent the whole of this period, without once having quitted Corinth. St. Paul, in like manner is said to have resided

three years at Ephesus; but if we understand this, as well as his eighteen months residence at Corinth, as implying that four years and a half were devoted to those two cities alone, St. Paul's assertion, 2 Cor. xi. 25. that he had thrice suffered shipwreck, when he wrote his second Epistle to the Corinthians, will be irreconcilable with St. Luke's narrative. And that St. Paul really did make an excursion from Corinth during the interval in question, and came therefore in fact a second time thither before its expiration appears from what he himself says, 2 Cor. xii. 14. xiii. 1. where he speaks of his intention of visiting Corinth a third time, which is what we generally call his second visit to Corinth.

If then it be admitted that St. Paul's voyage to Crete was made from Corinth, the Nicopolis, where he passed the winter, and where he expected Titus, was certainly Nicopolis in Epire. It is true that, in returning from Crete to Corinth, Epire lay quite out of his way: but he might have been driven thither in a storm, and perhaps at this very time he suffered one of the three shipwrecks\*, which he mentions in his second Epistle to the Corinthians. In this case he would have passed the winter at Nicopolis, and have preached the Gospel, as he himself says, round about to Illyricum. The circumstance likewise, that Apollos took part in the conversion of the Cretans agrees extremely well with this hypothesis: for Apollos appears to have come from Ephesus to Corinth, before St. Paul left that city on his first visit. See Acts xviii. 24—xix. 1.

The most probable hypothesis therefore, in my opinion, is that St. Paul's voyage to Crete, his subsequent stay in Nicopolis, and the Epistle to Titus, all belong to this period.

2. St. Paul passed three years at Ephesus, as we find from Acts xix. and xx. 31. In this interval therefore he might conveniently have made an excursion to Crete. But, if the excursion was made from Ephesus, the Nicopolis,

\* Every one knows what Horace says of the Infames scopulos Acroceraunia.

polis, where he passed the winter, must be sought, not in Epire, but in Asia Minor; and the Nicopolis in Cilicia must be preferred to that in Bithynia. For whoever sets sail from Crete, to return to Ephesus, can hardly be driven by adverse winds so far as into the Black Sea, and land at Nicopolis in Bithynia. The circumstance, that Apollos assisted St. Paul in converting the Cretans, is favourable also to the opinion that the voyage to Crete was made in an excursion from Ephesus: for it appears from 1 Cor. xvi. 12. that Apollos was then returned from Corinth to Ephesus. However, I think it very improbable, that St. Paul would have passed a whole winter at Nicopolis in Cilicia; for, since his zeal for the propagation of Christianity induced him in general to prefer large towns, as affording him a more ample scene of action, he would rather have spent the winter in Tarsus, which was both the capital of the country, and the place of his birth. A further confutation of this hypothesis is unnecessary at present: for, though I have mentioned it, as a possible one, I know of no commentator, who has adopted it.

3. Lardner is of opinion that between St. Paul's departure from Ephesus mentioned Acts xx. 1. and his last visit to Jerusalem a longer time elapsed, than is generally supposed, namely, almost two years: and in this period Lardner fixes St. Paul's voyage to Crete<sup>u</sup>. But this hypothesis is attended with insuperable difficulties.

The least important objection is, that Apollos, as far as we know, was then at Ephesus<sup>x</sup>. But, when St. Paul wrote his Epistle to Titus, Apollos was in Crete, as appears from ch. iii. 13., and therefore must either have accompanied St. Paul, or have been sent thither from Nicopolis.

But the following objection is more decisive. It is evident from 2 Cor. i. 8. 9. 10. that the second Epistle to

<sup>u</sup> Supplement to the Credibility of the Gospel History, Vol. II. p. 101—118. 187—191.

<sup>x</sup> See 1 Cor. xvi. 12.



to the Corinthians was written very soon after St. Paul's departure from Ephesus : so that it is impossible to refer to this very short interval St. Paul's voyage to Crete, and his residence in Nicopolis. Nor could he have lately suffered shipwreck, when he wrote his second Epistle to the Corinthians : for the misfortune the most fresh in his memory was the disturbance at Ephesus, which had obliged him to quit the place. Further, it is evident from what St. Paul says in the eighth and ninth chapters of this Epistle in respect to contributions for the poor, that after his departure from Ephesus he had visited only the Macedonian churches. If then his voyage to Crete, and his subsequent stay in Nicopolis are to be referred to Acts xx. 1—5. they must have taken place, after he wrote his second Epistle to the Corinthians. But in this case, neither of the three shipwrecks, which St. Paul mentions, 2 Cor. xi. 25. can have happened on the voyage either to or from Crete ; and then we shall have five voyages made by St. Paul and omitted by St. Luke, whereas according to the first opinion not only the number will be confined to three, but what St. Paul says, 2 Cor. xi. 25. will harmonize with, and explain what he says, Tit. i. 3.

Lastly, if we read with attention Acts xx. 1—6. we shall find it impossible to insert in this interval a voyage to Crete and a residence during a whole winter in Nicopolis, which together must have taken up at least eight months. For, as it was not usual in that age to undertake a voyage after the month of September, St. Paul's return from Crete must have happened at least before the close of September : and if we make his stay in Crete as short as possible, we must allow at least that his voyage to Crete was not later, than the beginning of August. Before therefore his winter residence in Nicopolis was finished, an interval of at least eight months must have elapsed. Now let us keep this in view, and follow St. Luke's narrative, Acts xx. 1—6.

Ver. 1. St. Paul leaves Ephesus, soon after Easter, and travels into Macedonia. In his journey from Ephesus

to Macedonia, no one will suppose, that he went by the way of Crete and Nicopolis, and, after having passed a whole winter in Nicopolis, arrived the next year in Macedonia. This would have been a very extraordinary circuit. Besides, if St. Paul had made this circuit, he would have visited Corinth before his arrival in Macedonia: but his second Epistle to the Corinthians, which was written in Macedonia, clearly shews, that he was then lately come from Asia Minor. This objection did not occur to Lardner, because he mistakenly supposed that Nicopolis, where St. Paul passed the winter, was Nicopolis in Macedonia.

Ver. 2. St. Paul travels from Macedonia to Greece, and in particular to Corinth. To this journey the circuit of Crete and Nicopolis is likewise unsuitable. In Greece he stayed three months, ver. 3. which is much too short a time for an excursion to Crete and Nicopolis. When he returned from Greece, ver. 3. 4. St. Luke expressly says that he avoided going by sea, and that he again went through Macedonia, whence he embarked for Troas. Here again he could not have taken Crete in his way. Lastly, the voyage from Troas to Palestine is described so very circumstantially by St. Luke, that no one will venture to suppose in this voyage a visit to the island of Crete.

Of the three opinions therefore, in respect to the time when St. Paul made a voyage to Crete, the first is certainly the most eligible, and I believe the true one,

### S E C T. III.

#### *Of the Jews in Crete.*

**S**T. PAUL's principal adversaries in Crete were Jews<sup>y</sup>. That they were very numerous in that island appears from the Epistle to Titus: but of their peculiar

<sup>y</sup> See Ch. I. 10. 14.

peculiar situation and circumstances at that time we have no certain accounts. Some centuries later, namely in the year 434, we know that the Cretan Jews became celebrated for their false Messiah<sup>2</sup>: but on the circumstances, which might tend to illustrate the Epistle to Titus, history is silent.

Perhaps however a part of what St. Paul says, 2 Cor. xi. 24. 'Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one,' was inflicted on him by the Jews in Crete. It appears from Tit. iii. 9. that they not only engaged in various controversies respecting the Levitical law, which St. Paul declared to be abolished, but introduced useless genealogies into their theology. Of what particular kind these genealogies were, I am unable to determine: but perhaps they were not unlike to what we find in the Targum on the books of the Chronicles, published by Beck and Wilkens, in which Anani, mentioned 1 Chron. iii. 24. is converted into the Messiah.

We see from ch. iii. 13. that Apollos assisted Titus in the instruction of the Cretans. Now as Titus was by birth a heathen, it is probable that Apollos was joined with him in the ministry, as being an eloquent interpreter of the law, with which Titus could not have been acquainted.

In none of his Epistles does St. Paul speak in such severe terms, as in his Epistle to Titus, of the Cretans, c. ii. 12—16. It is true that he uses the words of their own poet Epimenides, in describing their falsity: but the very application implies that he thought the description just, and that it was warranted by the actual state of the Cretans, especially of the Cretan Jews.

<sup>2</sup> Basnage Hist. des Juifs. Liv. VI. Ch. xv. p. 1281.

## CHAP. XIV.

## OF THE TWO EPISTLES TO THE CORINTHIANS.

## SECT. I.

*Of the city of Corinth : and when, and to whom, St. Paul wrote his first Epistle to the Corinthians.*

THE two Epistles to the Corinthians appear to have been written about five or six years after St. Paul's second Epistle to the Thessalonians, which was written at Corinth, while the Apostle was engaged in establishing a Christian community in that city. At Corinth he resided a year and a half<sup>a</sup>: at the expiration of which period he took a journey into Asia<sup>b</sup>, visited Ephesus, Jerusalem and Antioch<sup>c</sup>, and then passing through Galatia and Phrygia returned to Ephesus<sup>d</sup>, where he remained three years<sup>e</sup>. During this residence at Ephesus, and toward the close of it, St. Paul wrote his first Epistle to the Corinthians, as appears from ch. xvi. 8. where he says, 'I will tarry at Ephesus until Pentecost.' Further, that it was written at the Easter preceding this Pentecost appears from the expression used by St. Paul, ch. v. 7. 'ye are unleavened,' that is, ye are now celebrating the feast of unleavened bread. Now St. Paul's departure from Ephesus after his residence of three years there, was about the year of Christ 57: consequently, about that time was written that Epistle to the Corinthians, which is the first of those, which are now extant. In the subscriptions to this Epistle it is said to have been written from Philippi, contrary to St. Paul's own declaration, which I have just quoted. This mistake arose probably from a false interpretation of ch. xvi. 5. where  
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<sup>a</sup> Acts xviii. 1. 11.<sup>b</sup> Ver. 18.<sup>c</sup> Ver. 20—22.<sup>d</sup> Ch. xix. 1.<sup>e</sup> Ch. xx. 31.



the Apostle says, *Μακεδονίαν γὰρ διερχομαι*, which was understood as denoting, ‘I am *now* travelling through Macedonia,’ though it evidently denotes nothing more than ‘my route is through Macedonia.’

The city of Corinth was situated in Achaia, near the Isthmus, which joins Peloponnesus with the rest of Greece. It had two harbours, which opened to the two neighbouring seas, one of them convenient for the Asiatic, the other for the Italian trade. This situation contributed greatly to the wealth of the city: and though the Roman general Mummius had levelled it to the ground, yet it rose again, and gradually arrived at such a height of grandeur, as to be entitled to the appellation of the Capital of Greece. Julius Cæsar had greatly contributed to its restoration, and had sent thither Roman colonies. Near this city were celebrated the Isthmian games: and on this account St. Paul has many allusions to these games in his two Epistles to the Corinthians.

These Epistles were addressed, not only to the inhabitants of Corinth, but likewise to the Christian communities throughout all Achaia, as appears from the beginning of the second Epistle. There is a passage in the first Epistle, ch. i. 2. from which one might almost conclude that St. Paul’s intention was, that they who conveyed this Epistle to Corinth, should in their passage shew it to other communities. But an objection to this conjecture is, that St. Paul in many parts of this Epistle severely reproaches the Corinthians. To have shewn it therefore to other communities would unavoidably have provoked the Corinthians, which would have been neither consistent with St. Paul’s general caution, nor with the professions, which he soon after made in his second Epistle to the Corinthians<sup>f</sup>. I believe therefore that the passage in question, 1 Cor. i. 2. *τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ τε Θεῷ τῇ εὐσέῃ ἐν Κορινθῷ, ἡγιασμένοις ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ, κλητοῖς ἁγίοις, συν πάσι τοῖς ἐπικαλεσμένοις τὸ ὄνομα τε Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐν παντί τόπῳ, αὐτῶν τε καὶ ἡμῶν*, relates, not to the  
 Corinthians,

<sup>f</sup> Ch. viii. ix.

Corinthians, and to other Christian communities in places distinct from Corinth, but to Christians of two different descriptions in Corinth itself, which may be called, according to our present modes of expression, church-men and dissenters. I understand therefore the Apostle as saying, ‘to the Church of God in Corinth, together with all those who call on the name of Christ, whether they assemble in our place of worship, or in their own.’ Ἅγιοι in the language of the New Testament denotes Christians in general; and, as the Corinthian community was divided into parties, St. Paul distinguishes from the separatists, those who assembled in the usual place of worship, by the title of κλητοί. This expression is borrowed from the Septuagint, in which κλητη ἁγία the translation of מקרא קדש, denotes a congregation called together for divine worship. The dissenting party at Corinth, which met at their own place of worship, the Apostle mentions in terms of gentleness, and includes under the general appellation of ‘those who call on the name of Christ.’ The preceding explanation has likewise this advantage, that it shews St. Paul has not made use of superfluous expressions, and repeated only in different words at the end of the verse what he had said at the beginning.

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## S E C T. II.

*The state of the Christian community in Corinth described.*

**A**S the situation of the Christian community in Corinth was very remarkable, a knowledge of it will greatly contribute to the illustration of St. Paul’s two Epistles to the Corinthians. I will therefore enumerate the most material circumstances attending this church, which at the same time will throw a light on the other Epistles, because in these two St. Paul is very minute in respect to the regulation of divine worship.

1. The

1. The Corinthian community consisted, like most others, partly of Jews and partly of Heathens<sup>g</sup>: and hence St. Paul had to combat, sometimes with Jewish superstition, at other times with heathen licentiousness. Among the Jewish converts was Crispus, a man of no less rank than that of president of a synagogue<sup>h</sup>. Whether he continued in his office, after he was become a Christian, is a question which at present we cannot decide. That he did continue is a matter not impossible, because Christianity was considered at that time as a Jewish sect, and the synagogues were open even to the Apostles.

2. The Christian communities in general, during the Apostolic age, were of a mixed kind: and they contained both hypocrites and profligates. This may be especially affirmed of the Corinthian community<sup>i</sup>: and we may form some notion of their conduct from the circumstance, that they came not seldom intoxicated to the celebration of the holy sacrament<sup>k</sup>.

3. The church of Corinth had several eminent teachers, beside St. Paul. Crispus, one of its members, had been president of a Jewish synagogue. Aquilas, with whom St. Paul resided at Corinth\* instructed in Christianity a person, who afterwards became one of the most celebrated teachers<sup>l</sup>; and he is represented by St. Paul as one of his principal assistants, as having merited the greatest confidence. Apollos, a learned and eloquent Jew, spent likewise some time at Corinth<sup>m</sup>: and he appears to have stood in high estimation among the Corinthians. Sosthenes also must have been a man of great repute in the Corinthian church: for the first Epistle is written in the name of Paul and Sosthenes<sup>n</sup>, as the second is written in the name of Paul and Timothy.

<sup>g</sup> Acts xviii. 4.

<sup>h</sup> Ver. 8.

<sup>i</sup> 2 Cor. xii. 20. 21.

<sup>k</sup> 1 Cor. xi. 21.

\* Acts xviii. 3.

<sup>l</sup> Acts xviii. 26.

<sup>m</sup> V. 24—28.

<sup>n</sup> 1 Cor. i. 1. I have already observed Ch. x. Sect. 1. that as St. Paul usually dictated his Epistles, he sometimes added the name of his amanuensis to his own name, and wrote therefore in their joint names,

thy°. It is difficult to determine who *this* Sosthenes was, for among those who attended St. Paul on his travels, no person occurs with this name. Many commentators have supposed him to have been the same, as the Sosthenes mentioned in Acts xviii. 17. and there described as president of a Jewish synagogue: but of their identity we have no proof<sup>p</sup>. When St. Paul wrote his first Epistle to the Corinthians, Sosthenes, Apollos, and Aquilas, were with him at Ephesus<sup>q</sup>. Apollos seems to have left Corinth even in disgust: at least he declined returning thither, when this Epistle was sent<sup>r</sup>.

4. In the Corinthian community several sects had arisen, who took their names from their leaders, whom they blindly followed and whose learning and eloquence they highly extolled<sup>s</sup>. These heads of the Corinthian parties

° 2 Cor. i. 1.

<sup>p</sup> The only argument which can be alleged is, that both were called Sosthenes. But as different persons may have the same name, this argument proves nothing. On the contrary, there is reason to believe, that they were different persons. For, the Sosthenes, in whose name the first Epistle to the Corinthians was written, was undoubtedly a Christian: whereas the Sosthenes, mentioned Acts xviii. 17. was not only a Jew, but one of St. Paul's bitterest accusers before Gallio. It is true that he might have been afterwards converted to Christianity: but this is not probable, for St. Luke not only says nothing of his conversion, but relates that his accusation of St. Paul, and the public insult, to which he was in consequence exposed, happened only a few days before the Apostle left Corinth. Further, the Sosthenes, in whose name the first Epistle to the Corinthians was written, must have been with St. Paul, when he dictated that Epistle, that is, at Ephesus: but the Sosthenes, who was president of a Jewish synagogue at Corinth, remained there, when St. Paul left that city. At least he is not mentioned, Acts xviii. 18. among those who accompanied the Apostle.

Dr. Hoven, in a Corollary annexed to his dissertation, *De Christianorum sæculi primi vita et moribus*, asserts that Sosthenes and Crispus were one and the same person. But, as St. Paul names Sosthenes, 1 Cor. i. 1. and mentions Crispus, ver. 14. of the same chapter, it is evident that they were different persons: for he would surely not have created an unnecessary confusion, in mentioning in so short a compass the very same person under two different names.

<sup>q</sup> 1 Cor. i. 1. Acts xviii. 18.

<sup>r</sup> 1 Cor. xvi. 12.

<sup>s</sup> 1 Cor. i. 11. 12. From what St. Paul says V. 14—17. one might suppose that the leaders of these sects baptized in their own name.



parties endeavoured to lessen the character of St. Paul, and even to contest his apostolical authority: which obliged him to vindicate himself, and to speak in his own commendation<sup>s</sup>. Sometimes they accused him of want of eloquence<sup>t</sup>: at other times, of having suppressed some of the most profound truths of Christianity, and of having barely laid the foundation, on which they intended to build<sup>u</sup>. At one time they represented in an odious light St. Paul's refusal to receive pay from the Corinthians, alleging that he was conscious of not being a divine Apostle, and that his whole mission was a mere fraud<sup>w</sup>. At another time, they pretended that St. Paul, through distrust of his cause, conducted himself humbly and even servilely, when present at Corinth: but, that in his absence he wrote to them haughty and menacing letters<sup>x</sup>. Lastly, the very sufferings, which St. Paul endured for the sake of Christ, were to these men a subject of complaint: for they asserted that St. Paul incurred them merely through impetuosity and rashness<sup>y</sup>. Perhaps this extraordinary objection was occasioned by the Jewish maxim, 'that the spirit of prophecy rests only upon eminent, happy, and cheerful men.'

Upon reading the three first chapters of the first Epistle one would be almost inclined to think, that these sects had called themselves after Paul, Peter, and Apollos: but the rest of the Epistle shews that they were partisans of an adversary of the Apostle. Besides St. Paul himself ch. iv. 6. says that he used his own name and those of his friends by way of instances, in order to avoid the mentioning of his adversaries by name, and thus exposing them to public disgrace.

Locke has advanced the probable conjecture, that the party against St. Paul had only one leader. This at least

<sup>s</sup> 1 Cor. ii. ix. 2 Cor. x. xi.

<sup>t</sup> I request the reader to examine what I have written in the *Curæ* in *Actus Apostolorum Syriacos*, § 1. on Acts xviii. 5. 6.

<sup>u</sup> 1 Cor. iii.

<sup>w</sup> 1 Cor. ix.

<sup>x</sup> 2 Cor. x. 1. 2. 10. 11.

<sup>y</sup> 1 Cor. iv. 8—14.

least is certain that the Apostle speaks several times in the singular number, especially in 2 Cor. x. 10. 11: and where he has used the plural, he was influenced perhaps by motives of delicacy, and an unwillingness to bear too hard on a single person. In the second Epistle, ch. x. 2. he speaks in the plural number, and uses *τινες*, which shews that he meant certain persons in particular: and from ver. 6. it appears that he opposed these persons to the majority of the Corinthians. In ver. 7. he uses *τις* in the singular number, and says, ‘If any man trusts to himself that he is Christ’s, let him of himself, &c.’ Ver. 10. he says expressly *φησι*, and ver. 11. he is still more personal and determinate, making use of *τοιοῦτος*, a term, which he has elsewhere applied to the person who was guilty of incest, and which to those who understood St. Paul’s meaning, was as intelligible as the name itself would have been. The expression which he has used, ch. xi. 4. *ὁ ἐρχόμενος* is still more particular, and could not fail to point out to the Corinthians the person whom the Apostle had in view. In ch. x. 12. xi. 13. 14. 15. the plural number is again used: but in ver. 30. the plural is again changed for the singular.

It appears from 2 Cor. xi. 22. that St. Paul’s principal adversary was a Jew, who valued himself on this privilege: and hence we may explain the affair of the incestuous marriage, which was vindicated by St. Paul’s adversary, and which none but a Jew could vindicate. From 2 Cor. v. 16. 17. x. 6. 8. one might almost suppose that he was either a relation of Christ, or was personally acquainted with him, or at least pretended to be so. His arrogant pretensions, and the commendations which both he and his party bestowed on themselves, are represented by St. Paul in very lively colours. From 2 Cor. xi. 1—4. 13. 14. we must conclude that he was a man of infamous character, who endeavoured to counteract the propagation of Christianity: and I cannot suppose that he was any other, than the person, with whom St. Paul had principally to combat, in regard to the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead. I much doubt whether  
he

he believed at all in the Christian religion: for though, through motives of interest, he pretended to teach it, he might still have had secret designs to undermine it. If this be true, St. Paul probably alluded to him, 1 Cor. xvi. 22. where he says, *Εἰ τις ἔφιλει τὸν Κύριον Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν, ἦτω ἀνάθεμα.* To say this of a person, who merely had no love for Christ, would be too severe: for mere want of love may arise from a want of knowledge. Nor has St. Paul ever spoken in such hard terms, either of Herod, or of the Roman governors of Judæa, though they certainly did not love Christ. *Οὐ φιλεῖ*, therefore is here applicable, not to one, who has simply want of love, but to one, who has actual hatred of Christ, and who persecutes his religion, such as St. Paul's principal adversary at Corinth. The very place likewise, in which this passage is introduced, shews that St. Paul alluded to a particular adversary: for it is added immediately after the salutations to the brethren.

In the second Epistle, ch. xi. 4. is a remarkable passage, in which St. Paul says, 'If he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, &c.' Perhaps therefore St. Paul's adversary pretended to be possessed of the gifts of the Holy Ghost: and it is not improbable that, in order to seduce the Corinthians, he undertook similar facts and operations to those, which we have seen lately exhibited by Cagliostro and his associates.

I formerly supposed that Crispus, mentioned Acts xviii. 8. was St. Paul's principal adversary. But this supposition is without foundation: for St. Paul's principal adversary at Corinth was not originally an inhabitant of the place, but a stranger, who came thither after the foundation of the Christian church there. This appears from 2 Cor. xi. 4. where he is called *ὁ ἐρχομενος*: and the Apostle probably alludes to him 2 Cor. iii. 1. where speaking of recommendatory letters, he says, that he stood not in need of them, as

*some* did. But if Crispus was not St. Paul's principal adversary, he may have been *one* of those, who opposed the designs of the Apostle. Among the eminent teachers above-mentioned, Crispus was the only one, who still remained in Corinth : and whoever ventured to oppose himself to St. Paul must be supposed to have been a man of some eminence. Now it was St. Paul's usual practice to salute by name all those, who particularly distinguished themselves in the community to which he was writing : but though Crispus was one of the few, which the Apostle himself had baptized, though he had occupied the eminent station of president of a synagogue, and moreover was one of the earliest converts to Christianity at Corinth, St. Paul not only sends no salutation to Crispus at the end of this Epistle, but particularly directs the attention of the Corinthians to the family of Stephanas<sup>a</sup>. St. Paul's rejoicing, that he had baptized none but Crispus and Gaius, seems strangely placed in 1 Cor. i. 14, 15. For who would directly accuse him of having baptized in his own name and not in that of Christ ? Perhaps he only intended to remind Crispus in an indirect manner, that he was his immediate disciple, and had been baptized by him. An objection to the supposition that Crispus was one of St. Paul's adversaries may be made from the circumstance, that his name is mentioned in only two instances, in the whole New Testament, that he is mentioned in neither place with the smallest mark of disapprobation, and in one of them<sup>b</sup> even in terms of applause. Yet it is still possible that he afterwards became an adversary of St. Paul, though St. Luke has not mentioned it, especially as St. Luke has in most cases passed over the history of heretics in silence<sup>c</sup>. It is supposed by many that the Nicolaus, mentioned Acts vi. 5. was the founder of the heretical sect of the Nicolaitans : yet St. Luke has  
mentioned

<sup>a</sup> 1 Cor. xvi. 15.<sup>b</sup> Acts xviii.<sup>c</sup> See above, Ch. viii. Sect. 2.



mentioned him there as a Christian profelyte, and without giving the smallest hint, that he afterwards became a heretic of the first magnitude. It is therefore not impossible that Crispus likewise became a heretic, though it is not mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles. St. Luke has in fact mentioned very few of St. Paul's adversaries at Corinth, and of those in particular, who denied the resurrection of the dead, he has taken not the least notice. Nor must we forget that St. Luke did not accompany St. Paul to Corinth, but staid behind at Philippi: so that many material events might have taken place in the Corinthian community, which never came to his knowledge.

5. A marriage of the most abominable kind had taken place in the Corinthian community, and approved by its members, to the great offence of the heathens. Namely, a man had married his father's wife, that is, his own step-mother. Some commentators, in order to aggravate the offence, pretend that the father was still alive, and that either the son had committed adultery, or that the father had surrendered to him his wife. But as St. Paul has nowhere given the least intimation, that the father was still alive, this conjecture is without foundation: and therefore we must take the expression 'father's wife' in the sense in which it is used in the marriage laws of Moses<sup>d</sup>, where it denotes 'a dowager step-mother.' They, who contend that the father was still living, appeal to 2 Cor. vii. 12. on the supposition that he was 'the injured person' of whom St. Paul there speaks. But St. Paul might mean himself, in the same manner as in ch. ii. 5. he called himself aggrieved by the incestuous person. Besides, if the father had been alive when the son married, he must have given his consent, and therefore no injury was done him. That he did not commit adultery against the will of the father, but that he was actually in possession of the woman,

<sup>d</sup> Lev. xviii.

woman, as his wife, appears from the phrase *γυναίκα ἐχέτω*.

According to the laws of the city of Corinth, this marriage would not have been permitted by the heathen magistrate. For though the Athenian laws permitted marriage with very near relations, yet as soon as Greece became a Roman province, the Roman laws were introduced, and by these a marriage with a step-mother was strictly prohibited. For want of authorities I cannot strictly determine what punishment was annexed to a marriage of this kind under the reign of Nero, when St. Paul wrote this Epistle. But in the time of Alexander Severus, the punishment was *Deportatio*, or banishment to some desolate island, when a man debauched a widow, who was too nearly related to him, to admit of a marriage with her. Marcian, who lived in the reign of Severus, says, *Institut. Lib. II. Si quis viduam—cognatum, cum qua nuptias contrahere non potest, corruerit, in insulam deportandus est*<sup>c</sup>. Hence we may judge how severe the laws would have been against a man, who married his own step-mother.

But how was it possible then under these circumstances to contract such a marriage at Corinth? It could have been done only under the alleged sanction of the Jewish law. The Jews pretend that a proselyte by baptism becomes a descendant of Abraham, and in so strict a sense, that all former relations immediately cease. Hence they drew this conclusion, 'that a heathen was at liberty to marry his mother, or his own sister, as soon as she was regenerate by baptism'. Now the Jews were at that time permitted to live according to their own laws<sup>d</sup>: and the Christians were then considered as a Jewish sect. In particular

<sup>c</sup> See the Digest. L. xlviii. tit. 18. 5.

<sup>d</sup> See Maimonides in *Issure Biah*, cap. iv. Selden de uxore Heb. Lib. II. cap. 18. and *De jure nat. et gent.* Lib. II. cap. 4.

<sup>e</sup> Joseph. Antiq. Lib. xvi. 6. 1.

ticular the privilege of marrying according to their own customs, and without any regard to the Roman civil law, they retained till the time of Theodosius, who deprived them of it in the statute entitled *De Judæis et Cælicolis*<sup>b</sup> where we find the following clause, 'Nemo Judæorum morem suum in conjunctionibus retineat, nec juxta legem suam nuptias fortiatur.' The incestuous marriage therefore, of which St. Paul complains, might be solemnized, to the great offence of the heathens, under the sanction of Judaism or Christianity. And the Corinthian community had approved it, probably because the Jewish teacher, who opposed St. Paul, had defended it by arguing from the Jewish doctrines of baptism and regeneration.

6. It was usual among the primitive Christians, in imitation of the Jews, to appoint arbitrators, when one Christian had a complaint against another. Vitringa, in his treatise *De Synagoga vetere*, Lib. III, P. i. c. 13. p. 816. has quoted a law of Arcadius and Honorius, by which the Jews were indeed forbidden to hold courts of judicature, but were permitted to have arbitrators elected with the consent of both parties, whose decision the Roman magistrates were bound to support and execute. 'Si qui vero ex his communi pactione ad similitudinem arbitratorum apud Judæos in civili duntaxat negotio putaverint litigandum, sortiri eorum judicium jure publico non vetentur. Eorum etiam sententias judices exequantur, tanquam ex sententia cognitoris arbitri dati fuerint<sup>i</sup>. As the Jews possessed this privilege so long after the destruction of Jerusalem, we may conclude, that they enjoyed it before that time in still greater extent. And this inference is confirmed by a much more ancient Rescript of Lucius Antonius to the Sardinians, in which this privilege is represented as having been enjoyed by

<sup>b</sup> In the seventh book of the Theodosian code.

<sup>i</sup> This law, which Vitringa has quoted inaccurately, is in Lib. I. Cod. tit. 9. leg. 8. de Judæis et Cælicolis.

by the Jews, and is further secured to them. The words of this Rescript, as quoted by Josephus<sup>k</sup>, are as follows. ‘The Jews have represented to me that they have had from the very beginning their own assembly<sup>l</sup> according to the custom of their ancestors, and their own place, where they settled disputes among themselves. As they have now requested that the same be further granted them, I determine that leave be given to them.’ The Christians, as being reckoned among the Jews, had a right to exercise the same privilege: so that the Apostles did not infringe the power of the magistrate, when they directed the Christian communities to decide all civil contests among themselves by Christian arbitrators. But the Corinthian Christians, to the disgrace of their religion, brought their complaints before the heathen magistrate<sup>m</sup>, probably with the view of injuring the person accused<sup>n</sup> either by the aid of some unjust laws, or by misrepresentation in the pleadings, which could not have been practised with success before a Christian arbitrator, who decided merely according to equity.

From the expression used by St. Paul, 1 Cor. vi. 1, ‘Dare any of you,’ we may conclude that the fault, which he censures in the Corinthians was new and unusual. It is probable therefore, that they were not Gentiles, but Jews, who, regardless of their own customs and privileges, had appealed to heathen judicatures.

7. In most other Christian communities, there was a dissension between the Jewish and Gentile converts, because the former, though they had embraced Christianity, still adhered to the Levitical law. But the Corinthian community is an exception. It is true, that some weak brethren at Corinth scrupled to partake of meats, which had been offered to idols, as appears from 1 Cor. x. 24—30. But as St. Paul rather warns them

<sup>k</sup> Antiq. Lib. XIV. 10. 17.

<sup>l</sup> Συνοδος.

<sup>m</sup> 1 Cor. vi. 1.

<sup>n</sup> Ver. 8.



them against an abuse of liberty, as will presently appear, the majority of the Corinthian Christians must have been free from the common prejudices of the Jews.

It could not be unlawful in itself to eat what had been offered to idols; for the consecration of flesh or of wine to an idol did not make it the property of the idol, an idol being in fact a non-entity, and incapable of property. This is the doctrine taught by St. Paul, 1 Cor. x. 25. 26. 27. 29. 30. But some of the Corinthians, not satisfied with this liberty, thought it lawful to visit the heathen temples, which were frequently places of riot and debauchery, and to partake of the offered sacrifice, amidst the praises which were sung to the heathen gods°. This was an actual participation of the idolatry; and such persons were of course considered by the heathens as having joined in their worship. St. Paul therefore judged it necessary to warn the Corinthians against idolatry, which he has done especially 1 Cor. x. 7. 2 Cor. vi. 14—17. Whether an act be a religious test, or not, depends on the circumstances and place of its performance. If I eat a wafer in my room, it signifies nothing: but if I eat it before a Romish altar, I avow myself a member of the church of Rome.

The dissolute liberty of some members of the Corinthian community went still further. The majority of the heathen world considered the indulgence of sensual appetites as a matter in itself indifferent. Venus had a temple at Corinth, in which a thousand women were kept, in honour of the goddess, and for the gratification of her adorers<sup>p</sup>. Some of the Corinthian Christians were disposed to join in this worship: and the maxim ‘that all things were lawful<sup>q</sup>,’ which related  
only

° 1 Cor. viii. 10. x. 20. 21. 22.

<sup>p</sup> See Strabo, Lib. II. c. 16. and Mosheim’s Exposition of the first Epistle to the Corinthians, p. 8—10.

<sup>q</sup> 1 Cor. vi. 12. 13.

only to clean and unclean meats, they extended likewise to fornication. St. Paul therefore judged it necessary to censure this vice, and to pronounce it unlawful. The same scandalous tenets had taken place at Pergamos, when St. John wrote the Apocalypse, as appears from ch. ii. 14.

8. The public worship of the primitive Christians was very different from our own. In our churches the minister only has a right to speak and explain the scriptures: but in the primitive churches this privilege was not confined to a particular order, every one having a liberty to speak in public, for general edification<sup>r</sup>. This regulation of the Christian worship was, like other institutions, originally derived from the Jewish synagogue, in which every one, who was qualified for the task, with the permission of the president of the synagogue, might read and expound the law<sup>s</sup>. But as many of the primitive Christians had received extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost, it was their custom to edify the congregation by speaking alternately<sup>t</sup>. Some, who had received the gift of tongues, spake publickly in foreign languages, and by the exercise of this gift proved the divine origin of the Christian religion<sup>u</sup>: others again expounded what these had delivered<sup>w</sup>. This had likewise some analogy to the custom

<sup>r</sup> Altmann, in his *Observationes in Epistolas ad Corinthios*, p. 14, denies this: and quotes the instance of Alexander, who was blamed for permitting the celebrated Origen to speak publickly in the church, before he was ordained priest. But we must not argue from the practice of the Christian church in the time of Origen, to its practice in the time of the Apostles. Before the close of the third century, the customs of the Christian churches were materially altered, the authority of the clergy was increased, and the extraordinary gifts, with which even the illiterate laity were sometimes endowed, had long ceased.

<sup>s</sup> Luke iv. 16. Acts xiii. 15. 16. Vitringa de Syn. vet. Lib. III. cap. 7. p. 947.

<sup>t</sup> 1 Cor. xiv.

<sup>u</sup> Ver. 1. 2. 4. 5. 13—19.

<sup>w</sup> Ver. 13.

custom in the Jewish synagogues, of reading the law in the Hebrew, which was become a dead language, and of expounding it in the language understood by the congregation. Some prophesied<sup>x</sup>, that is, they spake in a known language, at the instigation of the Holy Ghost: others endeavoured to explain their prophecies, and to determine the time pointed at by the spirit of Christ, which was in them<sup>y</sup>. Some prayed, as they were immediately inspired by the spirit of God<sup>z</sup>. The Spirit which formerly animated David, when he celebrated in sacred hymns the praises of his creator, taught them likewise to praise God in spiritual songs<sup>a</sup>. If any one of the congregation felt an impulse from the Holy Ghost, to speak in public, he was permitted, and the rest were obliged to be silent while he spake<sup>b</sup>. In these cases even a woman was allowed to speak in public, as appears from 1 Cor. xi. 5. which at other times was prohibited<sup>c</sup>: for, when they spake by inspiration, *they* were not properly the speakers, but the Holy Ghost. If none of the congregation felt an impulse from the Holy Ghost, then probably in imitation of the Jewish custom, a portion of scripture was read accompanied with an exposition and an exhortation<sup>d</sup>. What St. Paul has said of prophecy in the Corinthian Church some commentators understand as denoting only an exposition of Scripture. But this use of the word *προφητεία* has been hitherto shewn by no decisive example: and as St. Paul has mentioned it among the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost<sup>e</sup>, I can see no reason for taking the word *προφητεία* in St. Paul's Epistles to the Corinthians, in any other than its proper sense.

The preceding paragraph contains only a summary view of the public worship established in the primitive Church. Whoever wishes to have a more full and elaborate account of it, must consult Dr. Benson's 'Essay concerning

<sup>x</sup> Ver. 1. 6. 24. 26.<sup>y</sup> Ver. 29.<sup>z</sup> Ver. 15.<sup>a</sup> Ver. 15. and Ephes. v. 19.<sup>b</sup> 1 Cor. xiv. 30. 31.<sup>c</sup> 1 Cor. xiv. 34. 35.<sup>d</sup> 1 Tim. iv. 13.<sup>e</sup> 1 Cor. xii. xiii. xiv.

concerning the settlement of the primitive Church, and the religious worship of the Christians, whilst the spiritual gifts continued,' which is annexed to his Exposition of the second Epistle to Timothy.

9. Several abuses in the conduct of public worship existed in the Corinthian Church.

The first of these consisted in an affectation of an unusual dress and appearance, among persons of both sexes, when they prophesied in the church: which was of course offensive to the Greeks. It appears from what Lucian has said in his treatise *De Gymnasiis*<sup>f</sup>, that among the Greeks the men never appeared in public with their heads covered: but the Jews on the contrary in performing the public offices of the synagogue, such as praying and reading the Bible, not only covered the head, but even veiled it. To this Jewish custom St. Paul alludes 2 Cor. iii. 14. 15. and speaks of it in a tone of ridicule, as being perhaps not universally received among the Jews, and a mere innovation. At present it is the universal custom of the Jews, when they read the law in the synagogue, to put on a veil, which they call *Tallith*: and I have known conscientious Jews, who would not even drink coffee, without first putting on their hats and praying in private. This custom of veiling they probably borrowed from the Romans, who thought that every object, which presented itself during the administration of religious ceremonies, was of great importance, and therefore took all possible care to avoid seeing at such times whatever might be interpreted a bad omen. For this purpose they covered their faces, and some went even in a covered vehicle to the place of sacrifice: for if the omen was not seen it was of no consequence<sup>g</sup>. From the Romans the custom of covering the face during religious ceremonies was transmitted to the

<sup>f</sup> Luciani Op. Tom. I. p. 736.

<sup>g</sup> Cicer. de Divinat. Lib. II. 36. More authorities are quoted by I. Casimir Hapbach, in his *Comment. de calumnia religiosa*. Cap. iv. § 12.



the Jews<sup>h</sup>: and from the Jews it was transferred to the Christians, who covered their heads whenever they spake in the public congregation. This gave the Christian church a ridiculous appearance in the eyes of the Greeks: and it was at the same time a superstitious custom, though the Jews and several Romans gave it a specious interpretation, by saying that they covered their faces in reverence to the Deity whom they adored.

10. In the Eastern countries, the women are obliged to live extremely reserved, and they reside in the innermost part of the house, where no man is permitted to approach them: and whenever they go out, they are obliged to cover themselves with a veil. Among the Greeks, the Spartans only excepted, the women led solitary lives in the Gynæconitæ, as Cornelius Nepos relates in his Preface: and when they went out, they likewise veiled themselves. When a Greek woman married, the bridegroom had not a right to take off her veil till the day after the wedding, for which reason this day was called ἀνακαλυπτηρία<sup>i</sup>. But they relaxed from this severity at the festivals instituted in honour of their Deities, at which the Grecian women appeared with their faces uncovered: and this is the reason, that in the Greek comedies love generally begins in a temple.

Under these circumstances, it was a disgrace for Christian women to uncover themselves during the time of divine service, and to present themselves not only in a manner unusual at other times, but like women of bad

<sup>h</sup> This has been shewn by Lakemacher, in his *Observationes philologicæ*, P. III. Obs. 2. I must remark however one mistake, which he has made in his interpretation of the two following lines of Virgil's *Æneid*, Lib. III. 406.

Ne qua inter sanctos ignes in honore Deorum  
Hostilis facies occurrat, et omnia turbet.

By *hostilis facies* he understands 'the face or sight of an enemy,' as of Diomedes or Ulysses, as he himself instances. But *hostilis* signifies here 'inauspicious,' and is a very usual expression in Roman augury, as every one knows, who is acquainted with Cicero's books, *de Divinatione*.

† See this word in the Index to Hudson's Longinus.

bad character among the Jews<sup>k</sup>. Yet the Christian women at Corinth uncovered their heads, when they prophesied<sup>l</sup>. This again was probably an imitation of heathen customs: for not only the Bacchæ did the same, but other pretended propheteſſes uncovered their heads and diſhevelled their hair, in order to ſhew their ſacred fury and enthuſiaſtic rage<sup>m</sup>. The reader therefore will not think it extraordinary, that St. Paul in the eleventh chapter of the firſt Epiſtle to the Corinthians ſhould oppoſe ſo ſuperſtitious and offensive a cuſtom.

II. In the exerciſe of extraordinary gifts many things were done, which obſtructed general edification. Some, who were vain of their gifts, abuſed them in ſuch a manner, as to prevent other members from ſpeaking in the congregation<sup>n</sup>. This was not practicable in the caſe of all gifts: no one, for inſtance, could prophesy, if the Holy Ghoſt did not inſpire him. But the gift of tongues was ſo conferred, that whoever poſſeſſed it could ſpeak at all times in foreign languages, without waiting for a freſh inſpiration. Conſequently this gift was the moſt liable to abuſe, and therefore St. Paul in the fourteenth chapter endeavours to regulate the uſe of it, and likewiſe to ſhew that it is not the moſt important gift of the Holy Ghoſt. Some commentators ſuppoſe that St. Paul's principal adverſary was a Jew, who was particularly vain of ſpeaking Hebrew. If this be true, we muſt conclude that he was an impudent impoſtor, who laid claim to gifts, which he did not poſſeſs, and endeavoured

to

<sup>k</sup> See Numb. v. 18. 2 Sam. vi. 20. and Bayle's Dictionary. Art. Babylon.

<sup>l</sup> 1 Cor. xi. 5.

<sup>m</sup> Thus Virgil ſays, *Æneid. Lib. IV. 509.*

Crines effuſa ſacerdos,  
Ter centum tonat ore Deos.

And Lib. VI. 46.

Cui talia ſanti  
Ante fores ſubito non vultus non color unus,  
Non comæ manſere comæ.

<sup>n</sup> 1 Cor. xiv. 30—33.

to make the credulous and illiterate believe, that a language, which was learned by every well educated Jew, had been communicated to him by the supernatural intervention of the Holy Ghost°.

12. In the first Epistle to the Corinthians we find the plainest indications, that they celebrated Sunday. They assembled on the first day of the week (*κατα μιαν σαββατων*<sup>p</sup>): and the expression *κυριακον δειπνον*, 1 Cor. xi. 20. may be translated, as in the Syriac version, ‘a meal which is proper for the Lord’s day,’ or, ‘a Sunday meal.’ In the controversy relative to the celebration of Sunday, it is extraordinary that this translation of *κυριακον δειπνον* in so ancient a version as the Syriac should never have been quoted. On this subject the reader may consult Pliny’s Epistles, Lib. X. Ep. xcvi. 7. and Böhmer’s *Dissertatio prima juris ecclesiastici antiqui ad Plinium*.

On Sunday therefore it was the practice of the primitive Christians to celebrate the Lord’s supper: and this was preceded by their Agapæ, or feasts of love. Böhmer, in his *Dissertatio quarta juris ecclesiastici antiqui ad Plinium*, has so fully explained this matter, that it is unnecessary to say any thing further on it. The eleventh chapter of the first Epistle to the Corinthians shews that these Agapæ were customary also at Corinth.

13. The Jews, who lived out of Palestine, were chiefly engaged in trade, and were in general in more affluent circumstances, than those, who resided in Judæa, to whom they usually sent an annual relief<sup>q</sup>. Now as the Gentile Christians became brethren to the Jews, and partook of their spiritual riches, St. Paul thought it equitable that the Greek Christians should contribute to the support of their poorer brethren in Judæa<sup>r</sup>. When he was at Jerusalem, he had promised Peter, and James, that he would collect alms for this purpose<sup>s</sup>: and accordingly

<sup>o</sup> See 1 Cor. xiv. 37. 38.

<sup>p</sup> 1 Cor. xvi. 1. compared with Matth. xxviii. 1,

<sup>q</sup> Vitring de Syn. Vet. Lib. III. P. I. c. 13.

<sup>r</sup> Rom. xv. 26. 27.

<sup>s</sup> Gal. ii. 10.

cordingly we find that he made a collection among the Christians at Corinth<sup>1</sup>.

14. Some of the Corinthian Christians denied the resurrection of the dead<sup>u</sup>. If St. Paul's principal adversary at Corinth, was a Sadducee, it is not extraordinary that the Apostle should have met with opposition on this doctrine. One of the most specious arguments against the resurrection of the dead seems to have been founded on the unsuitness of our gross body, and especially of some of its members, for eternal life: an argument, to which St. Paul has replied, 1 Cor. xv. 35. In like manner the Sadducees had attempted to silence Christ<sup>w</sup>: but the adversaries of this doctrine at Corinth made use perhaps of other arguments, and on the principle that evil derived its origin from matter, contended that a re-union with sinful matter could be of no advantage to a pure and intellectual soul.

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### SECT. III.

#### *Of the Epistle of the Corinthians to St. Paul.*

THE more immediate occasion of St. Paul's first Epistle to the Corinthians, namely of those which are now extant, was an Epistle which he had received from the Corinthians by the hands of Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus<sup>x</sup>. St. Paul had already warned them in a former Epistle, 'not to company with fornicators<sup>y</sup>.' This Epistle is now lost: for though we have an Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians in the Armenian language, which was published by the two Whistons, and annexed to their edition of *Mosis Chorenensis Historia Armenica*, yet Mosheim in his *Exposition of the first Epistle to the Corinthians*<sup>z</sup> rightly judges that this

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. xvi. 1.—4.    <sup>u</sup> 1 Cor. xv. 12.    <sup>w</sup> Matth. xxii. 24—28.

<sup>x</sup> 1 Cor. vii. 1. xvi. 17.    <sup>y</sup> Ch. v. 9.    <sup>z</sup> Pag. 19.



this is a spurious production. That St. Paul had really written an Epistle to the Corinthians before he wrote that, which we call his first Epistle<sup>a</sup>, is evident from what

<sup>a</sup> Dr. Stofsch in his above-quoted treatise, *De Epistolis Apostolorum non deperditis*, p. 75. has taken great pains to shew, that St. Paul by *Ἐγραψα υμῖν ἐν τῇ ἐπιστολῇ, μὴ συναναμιγνυσθαι πόρνοις*, 1 Cor. v. 9. meant no other than the Epistle, which he was then writing. He contends that the Aorist *ἔγραψα* may be taken in the present, as well as in the past time. But even if this be admitted, it will not be sufficient for his purpose: for in order to make *ἔγραψα* applicable to what we call the first Epistle, it must be explained of what St. Paul was then going to write, an explanation of which an Indicative Aorist is surely incapable. Besides, if St. Paul had meant to say, ‘in *this* Epistle,’ he would hardly have used *ἐν τῇ ἐπιστολῇ*.

If we read the whole passage, 1 Cor. v. 9—11. in connexion, the matter will become still more certain. ‘I wrote to you in an Epistle, not to company with fornicators: yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of the world. But now have I written unto you, not to keep company, if any man, that is called a brother, be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolator, or a railer, or a drunkard: with such an one no not to eat.’ It is evident therefore from what St. Paul himself says, that it was his intention in the Epistle which he was then writing to give a clearer explanation of the words, ‘not to company with fornicators,’ which he had written elsewhere, and which perhaps had been taken in a sense not meant by the Apostle. He explains therefore and says, that they were not to be understood of ‘fornicators of this world, &c.’ for then must ye needs go out of the world.’ Consequently, all the passages, which Dr. Stofsch has selected from the first (as it is called) Epistle to the Corinthians, relative to unchastity, are foreign to the purpose. The only part of the whole Epistle, which appears to be applicable to the present subject is 1 Cor. v. 1—8. the passage immediately preceding that, with which we are now concerned. This passage contains indeed St. Paul’s command to expel from the community the incestuous person: yet it cannot be the passage, which he had in view, when he said ver. 9. ‘I wrote to you in an Epistle, not to company with fornicators.’ For in the first place, it does not contain the words, of which St. Paul gave an explanation: and when a difficult or ambiguous expression is to be explained, the words in question must be retained, for if it be quoted in other terms, the explanation is nothing. Nor does it contain them even in substance: for it contains nothing, from which an inference can be drawn, that all intercourse in civil society with persons of unchaste character must be avoided. We must conclude therefore that the words ‘not to company with fornicators,’ which are not in St. Paul’s first Epistle now extant, had been used by the Apostle in a preceding Epistle, in which perhaps he had cautioned them, in general terms, and without entering into particulars, not to suffer men whose lives were openly  
vicious

what Mosheim has said in his Note to 1 Cor. v. 9. In this Epistle were contained several things, which the Corinthians did not understand, and of which they desired an explanation. At the same time they desired that Apollos would come to them, to which St. Paul answers, ch. xvi. 12.

On the general contents of this Epistle I shall not hazard a conjecture; but of a part of it we may form some judgement, from the questions, which the Corinthians, in answer to it proposed to the Apostle. These questions were :

1. Whether it were, in general, good and commendable to marry. 2. Whether it were necessary to separate from an unbelieving consort.

The former of these questions was divisible into two, each of which required a distinct answer, the one relative to virgins, the other to widows: for, when a widow married again, it was considered by the heathens as a breach of propriety<sup>b</sup>.

But who was there at Corinth, that could entertain any doubt of the lawfulness of marriage? The ruling party of the Christian community in that city had certainly no such doubt: for they had approved even of an incestuous marriage, and their conduct was such, that the Apostle had judged it necessary to caution them against fornication. It appears then, that only some few members of the Corinthian community, whose consciences were tenderer, than their minds were strong, had scruples in regard to matrimony: and this is probably, the reason why the Apostle answers the question with gentleness, that he might not expose to shame those who had proposed it. If the same doubts had been started

vicious, like that of the incestuous person, to continue members of the Corinthian community. As the general expression, which he had used through motives of delicacy had not produced its proper effect, he was obliged in his next Epistle to point out whom he meant in particular. At the same time, he explained and limited the command in such a manner, that it should not be understood, as containing an absolute prohibition, to engage in common transactions with men of bad character,

<sup>b</sup> Vitringa de Syn. Vet. Lib. III. P. I. c. 4. p. 658—661.

started at Ephesus or Colossæ, where the adversaries of matrimony grounded their objections on principles, which were injurious to morality<sup>c</sup>; the answer of St. Paul would probably have been different. On reading what the Apostle has written, 1 Cor. vii. 6. one might conclude that the opponents of these scrupulous persons at Corinth had gone too far on the other side, and maintained not only the lawfulness, but the absolute necessity of matrimony, a position which may be supported by specious arguments, and is agreeable to the doctrine of the Pharisees. If no one had gone these lengths, the Apostle would not have thought it necessary to say, that he permitted, but did not command matrimony.

The seventh chapter of St. Paul's first Epistle would be much more intelligible, if we had a precise knowledge of the objections, which some of the Corinthians had made to matrimony. The rejection of a state of life, which is necessary for the propagation of the human species, and the notion of a certain holiness in celibacy, which began at an early age to infect the Christian church, undoubtedly took its rise in some heathen philosophy. It certainly had not its origin in Judaism; for the Old Testament is highly favourable to marriage, and represents a numerous progeny, as one of the greatest blessings. It is true that the Essenes, who thought matrimony unworthy of a wise man, were a Jewish sect: but this doctrine they derived from the Oriental philosophy, not from the Jewish religion. Nor do any of the precepts of Christ, represent matrimony in an unfavourable light, or celibacy as a state of greater holiness. Egypt and the East were the countries, which gave birth to these superstitious notions, and afterwards generated the race of monks. If we examine the principles on which the Essenes, and the still later Manichæans, objected to matrimony, we may, by comparing them with St. Paul's answers, form some notion of the particular objections, which had been made to matrimony at Corinth.

Some

<sup>c</sup> See Col. ii. and 1 Tim. iv.

Some heretics, who made their appearance at a later age, but who derived their notions from a more ancient Oriental philosophy<sup>d</sup>, not from the Christian religion, rejected matrimony as being ordained by the Creator of the world, whom they considered either as an evil Spirit, or at least as a spirit, who was not omniscient. Such an objection would affect the very foundation of Christianity, which represents the Creator as the supreme and all-wise God. But it does not appear that this objection had been made at Corinth: for St. Paul's answer contains nothing, which is directly opposed to it.

He is equally silent on another objection, which the Manichæans and others made to matrimony. These considered the soul as pure and innocent, and ascribed the origin of sin to the gross matter, of which the body was composed, and which from its very nature was wholly incapable of being brought to a state of perfect purity. Now since the soul was imprisoned during the present life in this gross body, and the procreation of children occasioned such imprisonments, it was the duty of a wise man to abstain from it. This objection would have again affected the foundation of Christianity, and would have merited a severer answer than was given by St. Paul: for on the very same principles the Resurrection of the Dead must be considered as a misfortune, and as a fresh imprisonment of the soul, which had been delivered by death from its former state of confinement.

Nor do the Corinthian adversaries of matrimony appear to have objected to it on account of the sensual pleasures, which attend it: an objection, which would likewise have produced evil consequences, as it is the offspring of a gloomy and unnatural system of morality. At least in St. Paul's answer there is nothing, which implies this objection. Many ancient fathers, as well as the ancient heretics considered sensual enjoyments, and the pleasures even of the marriage bed, as a sin; and arguing therefore from the cause to the effect, they  
asserted

<sup>d</sup> See Beausobre Histoire de Manichée et du Manichéisme. Liv. vii. ch. 3. 4.



asserted that every child was therefore a creature of the devil. But these notions were not entertained by the Corinthian adversaries of matrimony, as appears from 1 Cor. vii. 14. For there the Apostle answers the questions, whether children born of parents, of whom one only was a Christian, and the other a heathen, were holy: which implies that the Corinthians had no doubts on this subject, when both the parents were Christians, and consequently that they did not believe that children born of Christian parents were creatures of the devil. Further, it is evident from what St. Paul has said, 1 Cor. vii. 32—34. that the Corinthians did not consider the pleasures of matrimony as a crime.

There remains therefore no objection, which the Corinthian adversaries of matrimony could have made, but one of the following kind, which is the most innocent, and has no bad effects on the doctrines of faith and morality. ‘Matrimony is a very precarious state, in which we sacrifice a part of our liberty and enjoyments, in which we must expect to suffer various inconveniences, and are exposed to the caprice and weakness of the person, with whom we are united. If the choice, which we have made, proves to be a bad one, the inconveniences, to which we have subjected ourselves, increase in proportion to the evil disposition and conduct of our consort. Whoever marries therefore places his happiness in a scale, without knowing on which side it will preponderate. Further, the support and education of children is frequently a heavy burthen. A moderate income, which would enable a single person to live with comfort, is insufficient to supply the exigencies of a family; and therefore matrimony may reduce us to distress, and even to misery. Again, the constant attention to economical concerns, and the necessary labour in procuring the means of subsistence, so completely occupy our time in a state of wedlock, that we have very little left for the exercise of private contemplation, and the performance of religious rites. Whoever is wise therefore will avoid entering into such a state: or if he has

entered into it, will endeavour, if possible, to obtain a separation, especially if the other party is an unbeliever.\* In this manner the Essenes objected to matrimony<sup>e</sup>: and its adversaries at Corinth objected probably in the same way. St. Paul, in his answer to them, acknowledges more than once, that it is prudent not to marry: and advises therefore all those to abstain from it, who do not feel themselves under a necessity of marrying. But on the other hand, since most men who are in health, and in the prime of their life, are inclined to indulge a propensity, which, though it frequently leads to inconveniencies, is necessary for the continuance of the human species, St. Paul assures them that it is ‘better to marry than to burn.’ To those who are already married he says that it is unlawful to separate: and he adds, that for these he had the command of the Lord, to continue in wedlock. For, whatever may be the inconveniencies attending this state, yet, when we have once pledged our faith, we are bound to fulfil our engagements.

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## S E C T. IV.

### *Contents of the first Epistle to the Corinthians.*

**T**HIS Epistle may be conveniently divided into the following sections.

1. The Introduction, ch. i. 1—9. St. Paul expresses his satisfaction at all the good, which he knew of them, particularly at their having received the gifts of the Holy Ghost, for the confirmation of the Gospel.

2. He rebukes the sectaries among them, and defends himself against his adversary, to whom most of the Corinthians adhered, ch. i. 10. iv. 21.

3. He

<sup>e</sup> The grounds, on which the Essenes objected to matrimony are given by Philo, Vol. II. p. 633—634. ed. Mangey. I have not quoted the very words of Philo, but have chosen rather to state the objection according to our modes of thinking.

3. He orders them to excommunicate the incestuous person, and to acknowledge no public fornicator as a brother, ch. v. 1—13.

4. He rebukes those, who brought their accusations before heathen judicatures, ch. vi. 1—9.

5. He teaches the Corinthians that fornication is not a matter indifferent, ch. vi. 10—20.

6. He answers their queries relating to marriage, ch. vii. 1—40.

7. He instructs them how to act, in regard to idol offerings. He judges it sinful to go to an entertainment in the temple of an idol, but not so, to partake at another place of meats, which had been offered to idols. However he advises abstinence even from this, if a weak brother be present, who would take offence at it. He illustrates the case by his own example, saying that he abstained from many things, which in themselves were lawful, because he would not excite a prejudice against the Gospel even in weak minds. He takes this occasion also to shew, why he had accepted no presents from the Corinthians, ch. viii. 1. xi. 1.

8. He censures the unusual dress adopted by both sexes in prophesying, ch. xi. 2—17. and

9. The irregularities committed at their love-feasts ver. 18—34. and also

10. Their abuse of the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost, ch. xii. 1.—xiv. 40.

11. He asserts the Resurrection of the Dead, ch. xv. 1—58.

12. He gives rules for the collection of alms, promises a visit to the Corinthian community, and salutes some of its members.

## S E C T. V.

*Of the effects of this Epistle on the Corinthians.*

**T**HIS Epistle produced on the different members of the Corinthian community very different effects. Many of them amended their conduct: and most of them had such respect for the Apostle, that they excommunicated the incestuous person<sup>f</sup>. They requested the Apostle's return with tears<sup>g</sup>, and became zealous for him, that is, they vindicated him and his office against the false teacher and his adherents<sup>h</sup>. In short, they shewed strong marks of an earnest repentance.

Yet the false teacher retained his party, which now began to go greater lengths than before. We see from the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth chapters of the second Epistle, that they denied St. Paul's apostolical ministry: and they grounded this denial on what the Apostle himself had written. In a former Epistle, probably in that which is now lost, he had signified his intention of coming from Ephesus to Corinth, of going thence into Macedonia, and from Macedonia of again returning to Corinth<sup>i</sup>. But the unhappy state of the Corinthian church altered his intention<sup>k</sup>: since he found that he must have treated them with severity. He was willing therefore first to send them a written admonition, and to wait some time for their amendment. Hence he tells them, 1 Cor. xvi. 7. that he then intended to go from Ephesus into Macedonia, and that from Macedonia he would make them a visit; which intention he put in execution, as appears from what St. Luke has said Acts xx. 1—2. On this conduct of St. Paul the party of his adversary made the two following remarks.

First, they said that he was very irresolute in his conduct, that what he determined one day he rejected the next, and that 'his word toward them was yea and nay<sup>l</sup>.' How then, they argued, could such a man be a Prophet,

<sup>f</sup> 2 Cor. ii. 5—11. vii. 11.<sup>g</sup> Ch. vii. 7.<sup>h</sup> Ch. vii. 7—11.<sup>i</sup> 2 Cor. i. 15—16.<sup>k</sup> Ver. 23.<sup>l</sup> 2 Cor. i. 18.



Prophet, or an Apostle? If he were invested with this character, he would not contradict himself, and recal to morrow what he promised to day.

This was a very specious objection, and St. Paul has given it its full force, 2 Cor. i. 17. The objections of the ancients, against the divine authority of the Apostles and of the Gospel, are in fact the most material: and the reader perhaps will be anxious to know how this objection may be answered.

1. It cannot reasonably be expected of a Prophet, that he should be omniscient; and that his divine inspiration should extend to all possible objects. He is divinely inspired with what he is to deliver to men in the name of God, but not with all the circumstances of human life or of his future conduct. He is infallible, and cannot contradict himself in those matters, which he knows by inspiration: but in other respects, and when he speaks not in the name of God, he is no more than a man. This is the rational notion of a Prophet: and he is so described in the Old Testament. Moses himself was fallible, till he consulted God<sup>m</sup>: and Nathan answered the question of David, whether he should build a temple, in the affirmative, when he followed his own human judgement, but he dissuaded David from the undertaking, after he had had a divine vision<sup>n</sup>. It was therefore a false conclusion, that St. Paul was not an Apostle, and that his Gospel was not divine, because he had changed a former resolution. This is the substance of what St. Paul himself answers. 2 Cor. i. 18—22. where he declares, that however he had altered his intentions he had made no alteration in his Gospel, which God had declared to be divine by the communication of spiritual gifts.

2. It is possible to predict a thing, which never takes place, without incurring the charge of falshood or imposture: namely when certain conditions are either expressed, or tacitly implied. When, for instance, I promise any man that I will frequently visit him, the condition

<sup>m</sup> Numb. xxxii. 6—15.

<sup>n</sup> 2 Sam. vii.

condition that we continue friends, and that my visits are acceptable, is necessarily implied. If we cease to be friends, he will not accuse me of falsehood for ceasing to visit him.

The Prophets of the Old Testament themselves sometimes foretold things under certain conditions, as Jonas for instance foretold the destruction of Niniveh, which did not take place, because the conditions, which depended on the will of men, were altered.

Thus St. Paul had formerly promised the Corinthians, while he was on amicable terms with them, to return before he went into Macedonia, that he might a second time impart to them the gifts of the Holy Ghost \*. But when the face of the things was totally changed at Corinth, and the Corinthians themselves did not fulfil the conditions, which St. Paul's promise presupposed; when they had fallen into errors and extravagancies, which rendered it impossible for him to impart to them the gifts of the Holy Ghost, he thought it necessary to alter his route, and not to visit them again, till his Epistles had produced some amendment.

The other conclusion drawn by St. Paul's adversary was, that the Apostle was afraid to return. In answer to this objection St. Paul says that he had hitherto spared this false teacher and his party: but that, if he came again and found no amendment, he should use the power committed to him as an Apostle, and punish some of the offenders in a miraculous manner. This would afford a proof of his apostolical authority, which however he wished to avoid.

\* 2 Cor. i. 15.

## S E C T. VI.

*Of the second Epistle to the Corinthians.*

**S**UCH was the state of the Corinthian church, when St. Paul after his departure from Ephesus visited the Christian communities in Macedonia<sup>p</sup>, and received from Titus, whom he had sent to Corinth, the account that the Corinthians had amended their conduct<sup>q</sup>. It was about this time, (that is about the year 58 of the Christian Era), that he wrote his second Epistle, as appears from 2 Cor. viii. 1—5. He sent it by the hands of Titus, who was invested also with power to forward the collection for the faithful in Judæa<sup>r</sup>. The subscription mentions that he sent Luke with Titus, which is grounded on 2 Cor. viii. 18. where St. Paul says, ‘and we sent with him the brother, whose praise is in the Gospel, throughout all the churches.’ Now this brother is explained by many ancient commentators of St. Luke: but this is not only mere conjecture, but one that is difficult to be reconciled<sup>s</sup> with Acts xx. 3—16. That Titus was accompanied by two brethren, when he carried St. Paul’s second Epistle to the Corinthians, is certain<sup>t</sup>: but who they were I cannot pretend to determine.

Of the effects, which this Epistle produced, we have no circumstantial accounts: for the journey which St. Paul took to Corinth, after he had written this Epistle, St. Luke has mentioned only in a few words, Acts xx. 2—3. We know however that St. Paul was at Corinth after he had written this Epistle, that the contributions, which he had ordered to be made for the poor brethren in Jerusalem, were brought to him thither from different parts<sup>u</sup>, and must have been very considerable, since St. Paul himself carried them to Jerusalem<sup>w</sup>: further,

<sup>p</sup> Acts xx. 1.<sup>q</sup> 2 Cor. vii. 5—6.<sup>r</sup> Ch. viii. 6.<sup>s</sup> See what was said on this subject, Ch. vi. Sect. 6.<sup>t</sup> 2 Cor. viii. 18—24.<sup>u</sup> Rom. xv. 26:<sup>w</sup> 1 Cor. xvi. 3.

ther, that St. Paul staid several months at Corinth, and that he was greatly respected by some of the principal members of that church, from whom he sent salutations in his Epistle to the Romans \*. From this time we hear nothing more of the adverse party : and when Clement of Rome wrote his Epistle to the Corinthians, St. Paul was considered by them as a divine Apostle, to whose authority he might appeal, without fear of contradiction. The false teacher therefore must either have been silenced by St. Paul in virtue of his apostolical powers, and by an act of severity, which he had threatened, 2 Cor. xiii. 2—3. : or this adversary of the Apostle had voluntarily quitted the place. Whichever was the cause, the effect produced must operate as a confirmation of our faith, and as a proof of St. Paul's divine mission.

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## S E C T. VII.

### *Contents of the second Epistle to the Corinthians.*

THE contents of this Epistle are the following.

1. St. Paul gives the Corinthians an account of his sufferings to the time of writing this Epistle, and of the comfort, which he derived from meditating on the Resurrection of the Dead, ch. i. 1—11.

2. He vindicates himself against those, who refused to acknowledge him as a true Apostle, because he had altered his resolution of going immediately from Ephesus to Corinth, ch. i. 12. ii. 4.

3. He forgives the incestuous person, ch. ii. 5—11. and on this occasion tells the Corinthians, how earnestly he wishes to hear an account of their amendment, ver. 12—13.

4. He treats of the office committed to him of preaching redemption, and highly prefers it to the office of preaching the law, probably because his adversary had pretended

\* Ch. xvi. 22—23.



pretended to be a teacher of the law. This false teacher he at the same time rebukes for the innovation of reading the law, with his face covered. Further, he shews that the sufferings, which accompany the Gospel, are no disgrace either to the Gospel or its ministers, and gives a short abstract of the doctrine, which he preaches, ch. ii. 14.

—v. 21.

5. He shews that it is his office not only to preach redemption by Christ, but likewise to inculcate certain duties, especially that of renouncing idolatry, which duty he enforces against those, who attended the idol festivals, ch. vi. 1—vii. 1.

6. He endeavours again to win the confidence of the Corinthians, by telling them how kindly he was affectioned towards them, and how greatly he rejoiced at their amendment, ch. vii. 2—16.

7. He exhorts them to a liberal collection for the Christians in Judæa.

8. He vindicates himself against those, who contended that there was not sufficient proof of his divine mission, and who imputed his caution at Corinth to the consciousness of not being a true Apostle, ch. x—xiii.

## CHAP. XV.

### OF THE FIRST EPISTLE TO TIMOTHY.

#### SECT. I.

*Of the time, when St. Paul wrote his first Epistle to Timothy.*

**A**BOUT the same time that St. Paul wrote his second Epistle to the Corinthians, or rather a short time before it, he wrote his first Epistle to Timothy, as Benson has very clearly shewn in his Prolegomena to this Epistle,

tle, to which opinion Lardner likewise upon the whole accedes. Other critics maintain, that it was written about the year of Christ 65, after St. Paul had been discharged from his first imprisonment in Rome, and again visited the church of Ephesus. This opinion, which is patronised by Pearson, le Clerc, Mill, and others, who grounded it merely on an induction made from the common Greek subscription to this Epistle<sup>y</sup>, is not very easy to be reconciled<sup>z</sup> with the notion of St. Paul's infallibility or his divine inspiration: for when he took leave of the elders at Ephesus in the year 58, he assured them that they would see his face no more<sup>a</sup>. Now it is hardly credible that all the Elders at Ephesus died within the space of five, or even seven years: and we know from 1 Tim. i. 3. that when St. Paul wrote to Timothy, he had left him at Ephesus only a short time before.

The principal arguments, by which Dr. Benson has proved his position, are the following.

1. It appears plainly from the third chapter of this Epistle, that no bishops had been then appointed at Ephesus. St. Paul instructs Timothy in the choice of persons

<sup>y</sup> Προς Τιμοθεον πρωτη εγγραφη απο Λαοδικειας, ητις εστι μητροπολις Φρυγιας της Πανατιανης. Now were it true, that this Epistle was written at Laodicea, it was certainly written after the expiration of St. Paul's imprisonment: for before that time he had never been at Laodicea, as appears from Coloss. ii. 1. But this subscription is undoubtedly erroneous: for when St. Paul wrote his first Epistle to Timothy, he had lately left Ephesus, and was gone, not into Phrygia, but into Macedonia, as the Apostle himself says, 1 Tim. i. 3. Wetstein has quoted other subscriptions, in which different, and more probable places are assigned. For instance, the subscription in one of Stephens's MSS. has Macedonia, and that in the Coptic version, to which may be added the Arabic version published by Erpenius, has Athens.

<sup>z</sup> In the first edition I represented it as wholly irreconcilable, which I here change into a more moderate expression, because it may be objected that Acts xx. 25. ('Ye all shall see my face no more') is capable of being interpreted in such a manner, as to denote that St. Paul would not see *all* the Elders at Ephesus again assembled together, not that he would see none of them again.

<sup>a</sup> Acts xx. 25.

persons to be appointed to that office, and expresses his desire and intention of soon returning to Ephesus. Now he could not have in view an office, which had been already filled, and was then vacant: and, as it was the usual practice of the Apostles, when they had established a Christian community, to wait till they were acquainted with the conduct of its several members, before they selected persons to be bishops, it seems as if none had been appointed at Ephesus, when St. Paul first wrote to Timothy. But it is not probable, that he left the Christian community at Ephesus for a long time without governors. Now he departed from Ephesus, when he travelled into Macedonia and Greece, as appears from Acts xx. 1.: and we see from ver. 17—28. that on his return to Ephesus bishops had been already appointed. Consequently this Epistle must have been written on his journey, and even at the beginning of it: for Timothy left Ephesus not long after St. Paul, as appears from Acts xx. 4. where we find him at Corinth in company with St. Paul, when the Apostle left that city to go again to Ephesus. In fact Timothy must have come still earlier to St. Paul, when he was travelling through Macedonia to Corinth: for the second Epistle to the Corinthians, which was written in Macedonia, was sent in the joint names of Paul and Timothy<sup>b</sup>. The first Epistle to Timothy therefore was written, as I observed at the beginning of this section, a short time before the second Epistle to the Corinthians.

2. Timothy, when St. Paul wrote to him his first Epistle, was in danger of being despised on account of his youth<sup>c</sup>. But he became an associate of St. Paul at Lystra<sup>d</sup>, so early as the year 50, according to the common calculation, and perhaps according to a more exact calculation, still earlier<sup>e</sup>. Now when he was chosen by St. Paul, as an assistant in the propagation of the Gospel, the least age, which we can ascribe to him is that of twenty. Consequently, if the first Epistle to him was

written

<sup>b</sup> 2 Cor. i. 1.

<sup>c</sup> 1 Tim. iv. 12.

<sup>d</sup> Acts xvi. 1.

<sup>e</sup> See Ch. xi. Sect. 1.

written so late as the year 65, he was not only at least thirty-five years of age, but had been a preacher of the Gospel not less than fifteen years. Under these circumstances he could have been in no danger of being despised on account of his youth: but he certainly was so, before he had reached his twenty-seventh year.

I therefore agree with Dr. Benson in dating this Epistle at the time of St. Paul's journey into Macedonia mentioned Acts xx. 1.: but in what particular town it was written I cannot determine, nor is it of any importance to the understanding of the Epistle. Now, if St. Paul wrote during this journey to Timothy at Ephesus, Timothy must have returned to the Apostle at Ephesus, after he had taken the journey from that city into Greece, which is mentioned, Acts xix. 21—22. 1 Cor. iv. 17. St. Paul was obliged to leave the Ephesian community sooner than he intended, because Demetrius excited an insurrection against him. He therefore left Timothy behind him at Ephesus<sup>f</sup>, to re-establish order in the church, to fill the ecclesiastical offices, and to oppose the false teachers.

Now as Timothy knew perfectly well the charge, which was committed to him, an Epistle like this was not necessary merely for his sake. But as some of the Ephesians would not submit to him, and others intruded themselves as bishops and ministers, St. Paul wrote this Epistle, which he might lay before them as a document, in which the Apostle invested him with full powers. It may be considered therefore as an Epistle to the Ephesians, as well as to Timothy, See ch. i. 3. 18. iv. 6. 12. 13. v. 23.: which passages, and likewise several others in the Epistle, receive a light from this observation.

Of the person and parentage of Timothy we read an account, Acts xvi. 1—3.: and from various parts of the New Testament we learn that he was almost the constant companion of St. Paul.

<sup>f</sup> 1 Tim. i. 3.



## S E C T. II.

*General remarks on the sect of the Essenes, who had already inculcated their doctrines at Ephesus, when St. Paul wrote his first Epistle to Timothy.*

**I**T is absolutely necessary to be acquainted with the state of the Ephesian church, in order to understand the Epistles of St. Paul to Timothy, and to the Ephesians<sup>z</sup>. But before we can form a true judgement of the state of the Ephesian church, we must acquire some knowledge of the Essenes, a Jewish sect which began to spread itself at Ephesus, and to threaten great mischief to Christianity: for which reason the Apostle in the above-mentioned Epistles, and likewise in that to the Colossians declared himself openly against them.

Among ancient writers, there are four, who have given some account of this sect. Philo mentions them in the treatise, where he proves the maxim, that every virtuous man is free, and describes them more fully in his essay on contemplative life. He has likewise spoken of them in a passage of his Apology for the Jews, which is quoted by Eusebius<sup>h</sup>. The name, by which he has called them in Greek, is Θεραπευται, which in the Greek language signifies what Essene signifies in Egyptian, and is in fact nothing more than a translation of it<sup>i</sup>. He describes them in a very favourable manner, which in Philo is by no means extraordinary, for they united the philosophy of Egypt, where Philo both lived and had been educated, with the doctrines of the Jews<sup>k</sup>. But  
that

<sup>z</sup> To these may be added likewise the Epistle to the Colossians, to which they have a great resemblance.

<sup>h</sup> Præpar. Evang. Lib. VIII. 10.

<sup>i</sup> See the Thes. Epist. la Crozianus, Tom. III. p. 168.

<sup>k</sup> It is not improbable that he had the Essenes in view in those places, where he describes the perfectly wise and virtuous man, who retires from the bustle of the world to enjoy private contemplation.

that Josephus, who was educated in the school of the Pharisees, judged likewise very favourably of the Essenes may afford matter of surprise. He was probably deceived by the appearance of sanctity, which they affected, a sanctity extravagant and inconsistent with a rational system of morals, which St. Paul therefore, who had a greater share of penetration, very properly condemned. The place in which Josephus treats most fully of the Essenes is, *Bell. Jud. Lib. II. cap. 8.*: but he has likewise given some short accounts of them in the following passages, *Antiquit. Lib. XIII. c. 5. § 9. L. XV. c. 10. § 4—5. L. XVII. c. 12. § 3. and L. XVIII. c. 1. § 5.* all which passages deserve to be read. Pliny in his *Hist. natur. Lib. V. c. 17.* has also given an account of the Essenes, and has related some circumstances, which are noticed neither by Philo nor by Josephus. Solinus, in his *Polyhistor*, cap. 35. has repeated what Pliny had said, but with an intermixture of error, and a fabulous addition.

It is unnecessary to quote the modern writers, who have written on the sect of the Essenes<sup>1</sup>: but I cannot pass over in silence the controversy which was conducted on this subject by the Jesuit Nicolaus Serarius on the one side, and Joh. Drusius, and Joseph Scaliger, on the other. The similarity of the sentiments of the Essenes to those of the church of Rome induced Serarius to seek for them an honourable origin. He contended therefore that they were Asideans, and derived them from the Rechabites mentioned in the Old Testament: at the same time he asserted that the first Christian monks were Essenes. Both of the positions were denied by his antagonists: but in respect to the latter, Serarius was certainly in the right. The Essenes were indeed a Jewish and not a Christian sect: but it is evident from the above-mentioned Epistles of St. Paul, that to the great mortification of the Apostle they insinuated themselves very early into the Christian church. Eusebius has fully shewn<sup>m</sup>, that the monastic life was derived  
from

<sup>1</sup> Fabricii *Lux salutaris Evangelii*, cap. IV. p. 55.

<sup>m</sup> *Hist. Eccles. Lib. II. cap. 17.*

from the Essenes: and, because many Christians adopted the manners of the Essenes, Epiphanius <sup>n</sup> took the Essenes in general for Christians, and confounded them with the Nazarenes, a confusion to which the similitude of this name to that of the Nazarites of the Old Testament might in some measure contribute. However it does no honour to the monastic life to derive it from the Essenes: for St. Paul cautions Timothy against this sect, and in the fourth chapter declares, that it would be the cause of that great apostacy, which had been foretold by the Spirit.

The controversy, which has been conducted relative to the Therapeutæ, whom some writers distinguish from the Essenes, is related by Mosheim in his *Institutiones historiæ Christianæ majores*, Sæc. I. P. i. cap. 2. § 13. Montfaucon and Helyot have attempted to prove them Christians, but the former has been confuted by Boucher. The late Dr. Lange in his two dissertations *De Thereapeutis in Ægypto et Essenis*, contends that they were nothing more than circumcised Egyptians: but this opinion has been confuted by Dr. Heumann. From the *Thesaurus Epist. la Crozianus*, Tom. III. p. 170. it appears, that La Croze also considered the Therapeutæ as circumcised Egyptians: and that Jablonsky intended to write on this subject, which however he did not put in execution.

<sup>n</sup> Hæres. XXIX.

## S E C T. III.

*Of the principal doctrines and customs of the Essenes, against whom St. Paul wrote his first Epistle to Timothy, as also those to the Ephesians and Colossians.*

THE scattered accounts, given by Philo and Josephus, of the Essenes, may be all explained from the principles of that philosophy, which may be termed the oriental or the Gnostic, and which I presume the reader has already learnt from ecclesiastical history. It must be observed however, that the Essenes did not adopt all the peculiarities of this philosophy, for they confined themselves chiefly to the moral part of it, which they received in its most gloomy and monastic form. That they rejected the speculative parts of this philosophy, especially what related to the creation, we may conclude from the circumstance that Philo has so highly extolled them: which he certainly would not have done, if they had represented the Creator as a Spirit, inferior to the Supreme Being, and capable of error, because this doctrine of the Gnostics is reprobated by Philo in the strongest terms.

The Essenes held the names of their angels as sacred, and therefore not to be uttered. These angels were probably considered as their mediators with God, in which respect the other Egyptian Jews, and even Philo himself, concurred with them.

They abstained from blood: and those, who lived in Egypt would not even offer a sacrifice, because they regarded the slaying of beasts as sinful. They considered wine as a poison, which deprives men of their senses: and partook of no other food than bread, salt, water, and at the utmost of hyssop. Solinus indeed pretends that they ate dates: but he seems to have mis-



misunderstood Pliny, from whom he copied, and who calls the sect of the Essenes ‘*Socia palmarum*,’ that is, ‘who dwelt near palm trees.’ They even thought it dangerous to the soul to satisfy the body. Many of them ate only once in three days, and some only once a week: and this in the night, because they esteemed it a work fit only for darkness to relieve the wants of the body. They thought themselves greatly defiled after touching oil, or a young man, and in order to remove the stain they carefully washed the place of contact. Most of them abstained from marriage, and thought it an obstacle to the search after wisdom. The places, in which they pursued their meditations, and which they held sacred, were called *μοναστηρια*. All ornamental dress they detested. They maintained a perfect community of goods, and an equality of external rank, considering vassalage as a violation of the laws of nature. They believed the soul would live for ever: but they seem to have denied the resurrection of the body, which according to their principles would only render the soul sinful by being reunited with it.

They attributed a natural holiness to the sabbath day, because it is the seventh: and the number seven results from adding the sides of a square to those of a triangle. They observed the sabbath therefore more strictly than other Jews, and avoided as much as possible on this day to perform the necessary offices of nature.

They spent most of their time in contemplation, which they called philosophical, and boasted of a philosophy pretended to be derived from their ancestors, with which the pages in Philo and Josephus quoted in the preceding section abound.

After this statement of the doctrine and manner of the Essenes, the reader will easily perceive from the contents of St. Paul’s first Epistle to Timothy, and of those to the Ephesians and Colossians, that they were written with a view of confuting the errors of this sect.

These three Epistles have a striking affinity to each other. The Epistle to the Colossians resembles that to the Ephesians both in its contents, and in its language, so that the one illustrates the other. In all three the Apostle shews the superiority of Christ to the angels, and warns the Christians against the worship of angels. He censures the observation of sabbaths, rebukes those, who forbid marriage, and the touching of certain things, who deliver commandments of men concerning meats, and prohibit them. He permits Timothy to drink wine, blames those, who abstain from nourishing their bodies, and enjoin various bodily exercises. He cautions his readers against a philosophy, which teaches all these things, and against persons, who assume a great appearance of wisdom and virtue. Further, the Apostle delivers Hymenæus over to Satan, because he pretended, that there was no resurrection of the flesh. Lastly, the very words, which Philo has used in describing the tenets of the Essenes, are for the most part retained by St. Paul. It is manifest therefore that the Apostle wrote with a view of confuting this sect.

The only objection which could be made to this opinion is, that the Essenes lived, as is generally supposed, in deserts and not in towns: whence it might be concluded that the church at Ephesus could not have been infected by them. But if this supposition were true, it would still be possible that their doctrines spread from the retirement of the Essenes into the neighbouring cities; for instance, from the deserts of Egypt into Alexandria. But the notion that the Essenes never resided in towns is a mistake. There is a passage in Josephus, Bell. Jud. Lib. II. § 4. which puts the matter out of doubt: *Μία γὰρ ἐστὶν αὐτῶν πόλις, ἀλλ' ἐν ἑκάσῃ κατοικεῖσι πολλοί*, and a few lines after, *Κηδεμῶν ἐν ἑκάσῃ πῶλει τὰ ταγμάτων ἐξαιρετῶς τῶν ξένων ἀποδεικνύται, ταμειῶν ἐσθῆτα καὶ τὰ ἐπιτηδεῖα*. This objection therefore is devoid of foundation.

## S E C T. IV.

*Of the more immediate cause of the propagation of the Essene errors at Ephesus.*

**S**T. PAUL's first visit to Ephesus was on the journey, which he made from Corinth to Syria, as appears from Acts xviii. 19. and was about four years before he wrote his first Epistle to Timothy. He had then preached the Gospel the first time at Corinth, and was travelling to Jerusalem, to perform a vow, which he had made. When he left Corinth it does not appear that he had any intention of going to Ephesus, for St. Luke writes, Acts xviii. 18. that he set sail for Syria. Some accident therefore unknown to us must have brought him to Ephesus. At this first visit he seems not to have preached to the Gentiles, on account probably of the shortness of his stay: St. Luke at least says nothing of any conversation at that time with heathens, and mentions only that he taught in the synagogue. Some of the Jews requested him to remain there, with which request he could not comply, but he promised that he would soon return to them. These Jews were either well inclined to Christianity, or had actually received it. He left Aquilas and Priscilla at Ephesus, and travelled himself to Jerusalem. St. Luke indeed does not mention Jerusalem by name: but having related the Apostle's arrival at Cæsarea, ver. 22. he adds that St. Paul 'went up, and saluted the church,' which 'going up' signifies the going up to Jerusalem, as my father has shewn in his *Dissertatio de notione inferi et superi in chorographiis sacris*, § 36—38.

In the mean time, as we see from ver. 24. the eloquent and learned Jew Apollos arrived at Ephesus. St. Luke says in the following verse, that he was 'instructed in the way of the Lord' (κατηχημένος τῇ ὁδῷ

τῆς Κυρίᾳ), by which he means the religion of Christ. The word κατηχημένος represents him as having then only just imbibed the principles of Christianity, not as a person then qualified to be a teacher: though I will not assert that St. Luke intended to describe him as a catechumen, according to the ecclesiastical sense of the term. That his proficiency in Christianity was at that time not very great, appears likewise from what St. Luke has added in the same verse, namely, that though he spake and taught of the Messiah from a knowledge of the Old Testament, he had been initiated only in the baptism of John. But as John the Baptist had taught his disciples that he was only the forerunner of the Messiah, who would baptize with the Holy Ghost, Apollos must have expected the gifts of the Holy Ghost, though he did not know that they had been actually communicated. It is true, that when St. Paul came soon after to Ephesus, he met with twelve other persons, who, like Apollos, had been baptized only according to the baptism of John, and when questioned by St. Paul, whether they had received the gifts of the Holy Ghost, answered, 'We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost.' Yet I cannot suppose that either they or Apollos were totally ignorant of the existence of the Holy Ghost, or that they had never heard the name mentioned: and therefore I understand their answer to St. Paul as implying nothing more, than that they did not know whether the great promise was already accomplished, that the Messiah would baptize with the Holy Ghost. Now this deficiency of Apollos in the doctrines of Christianity was supplied by Aquilas and Priscilla, who, on their arrival at Ephesus, gave him further instructions<sup>p</sup>.

But even before Apollos had received the instructions of Aquilas and Priscilla, he taught publicly in the Jewish synagogue at Ephesus concerning the Messiah<sup>q</sup>.

Hence

\* Acts xix. 1—7.

p Acts xviii. 26.

q Ver. 25—26.



Hence it is not improbable, that the Essenes introduced themselves into the church of Ephesus by the means of Apollos, who came from Alexandria, in the neighbourhood of which city, according to Philo, the Essenes were not only very numerous, but were held in high estimation at Alexandria itself. It is true that Apollos is not expressly said to have been an Essene: but as he had been a member of that sect, which took its name from the Baptist, and this sect in many respects resembled that of the Essenes, especially in their strict fasts, it is highly probable that Apollos, before he was better instructed, had suffered himself to be blinded by that external appearance of wisdom and sanctity, by which the Essenes made so many converts.

I have already observed that beside Apollos, twelve other persons, came to Ephesus, who had been baptized only according to the baptism of John. St. Paul on his arrival there baptized them in the name of Jesus, and imparted to them the gifts of the Holy Ghost, of which till that time they had no knowledge. From this last circumstance one might almost conclude that these persons had lived in some desert place: for whoever has been baptized, and taught to expect the gifts of the Holy Ghost, must have heard of their actual communication within the course of twenty years after Christ's ascension, unless a total retirement from the world had cut off all means of information. Perhaps these twelve disciples were Egyptian hermits: or possibly they had spent the former part of their lives in the desert of Judæa, where John had baptized. Now the desert of Judæa, as well as the desert of Egypt, was a place of resort for the Essenes, who, according to Pliny, were very numerous in the neighbourhood of Engeddi, near the Dead sea. It is therefore very probable that they were either Essenes themselves, or at least that they had imbibed the principles of this sect. Now since Apollos and these twelve persons were the first converts to Christianity at Ephesus, we see in what manner the Essene tenets were introduced into

the Ephesian church. I will not accuse them of an actual design of propagating heresy: on the contrary, I am persuaded that, after they had been fully instructed, and had received spiritual gifts, they embraced Christianity with great sincerity. But, as it is extremely difficult to eradicate entirely the principles in which we have been educated, it is not extraordinary that Effene notions were disseminated in a community, of which men attached to this sect were the earliest and principal members.

Further, it is not impossible, though till further proof be given, it cannot be asserted as a fact, that the Jewish exorcists mentioned Acts xix. 13. who, during St. Paul's residence at Ephesus, attempted to cast out evil spirits by invoking 'the Lord Jesus whom Paul preached,' were likewise Effenes. For it is well known that the Effenes applied themselves to superstitious arts, and pretended to have converse with spirits. Some of them laid claim to the gift of prophecy, of which we find many instances in Josephus: others healed diseases, and as Josephus expressly mentions, made use of herbs for that purpose, with the virtues of which they thought themselves better acquainted than others. Now we know that the Jews ascribed almost all diseases to the influence of evil spirits. To cure a disease therefore was, according to their notions, to expel an evil spirit: and it appears from the relation of Josephus<sup>r</sup>, that it was one of their modes of expulsion to apply a ring to the nose of the diseased person, and to use a certain root, supposed to possess a magic power. Such arts are well suited to the manner of life and principles of the Effenes. On the other hand it is not impossible that these exorcists were Pharisees, who likewise entertained these notions of exorcism, as appears from Matth. xii. 24-27. That the Jewish exorcists at Ephesus therefore were Effenes, I advance only as a conjecture, and as a subject of further consideration.

<sup>r</sup> Bell. Jud. Lib. VII. 2-23.

## C H A P. XVI.

## OF THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS.

## S E C T. I.

*Of the date and occasion of this Epistle: and of Tertius, who acted as St. Paul's amanuensis in committing it to writing.*

THE Epistle to the Romans was written after St. Paul's arrival at Corinth, and at the time, when he was preparing to go to Jerusalem with the supplies, which had been collected in Macedonia and at Corinth<sup>s</sup>. It was written therefore toward the end of the year 58. The journey of Phœbe from Corinth to Rome afforded St. Paul an opportunity of writing to the Roman Christians: but the motive, which induced him to write, was the consideration of his duty, as an Apostle of the Gentiles, to instruct in the principal doctrines of Christianity the Roman community, which had been hitherto visited by no Apostle. As it was the custom of the Jews to corrupt the Gospel of Christ by various additions, St. Paul had reason to apprehend, that the Romans would be doubtful whom they should believe, since they had not received the Gospel from any Apostle immediately commissioned by Christ. He therefore found it necessary to lay before them a short abstract of the principal truths of the Gospel, which were in danger of misrepresentation.

He dictated this Epistle to an amanuensis, whose name was Tertius, as appears from ch. xvi. 22. Some commentators have conjectured that this Tertius was the same person as Silas, because שלש in Hebrew signifies 'three.' But this Hebrew word would be expressed

<sup>s</sup> Rom. xv. 25—27. xvi. 1.

expressed in Greek by Σαλος, not by Σιλας: nor does *wh* any where occur as a proper name. Besides, as Tertius is a well known Latin name, it is wholly foreign to the purpose to seek for a Hebrew etymology. Silas appears likewise to be a Latin name, and a contraction of Silvanus: so that between Tertius and Silas there is no connexion whatever. In fact the attempt to identify Tertius either with Silas or with any other person, is very extraordinary, since no reason can be assigned why Tertius should not be considered as having had a separate existence for himself. La Croze hazarded a different conjecture, though of a similar kind, and contended that Tertius was nothing more than a name of St. Paul, who bore the three names of Saulus, Paulus, and Tertius<sup>†</sup>. In ch. xvi. 22. is 'I Tertius, who wrote this Epistle, salute you in the Lord.' Now if St. Paul himself had been here meant, it would have been sufficient to have said, 'I salute you,' without any name: or if it was necessary to express a name, surely that would have been used, by which the Apostle was already known to the Romans, and the passage would have run thus, 'I Paul salute you.' Besides, as St. Paul had already saluted the Romans, ver. 16. a salutation in his own name in ver. 22. would have been wholly superfluous. We may rest satisfied therefore with knowing that the person to whom St. Paul dictated his Epistle to the Romans was called Tertius: and it is totally useless to ask any further questions about him, for they never can receive an answer.

<sup>†</sup> Left the reader should doubt, whether so great a man as La Croze could advance such a conjecture, I request him to consult F. W. Roloff's dissertation, *De tribus Pauli nominibus*, printed at Jena in 1731.



## S E C T. II.

*Of the foundation of the church at Rome, and its first teachers.*

THE foundation of the church at Rome, appears not to have been laid by an Apostle. St. Paul had never been at Rome, when he wrote his Epistle to the Romans, as he himself says, ch. i. 13.: and that St. Peter converted the Romans to Christianity, and then resided among them as their bishop, has in modern times been sufficiently exploded as an empty fable. It is impossible that St. Peter could have been in Rome either before St. Paul wrote his Epistle to the Romans, or even before St. Paul himself came thither. For had he been there when St. Paul wrote to the Romans, his name would certainly have appeared in the list of salutations to the principal members of the Roman community. And if he had been at Rome, when St. Paul arrived there, a salutation would have been sent from him, as an immediate Apostle of Christ, in the Epistles, which St. Paul wrote from Rome. Besides, in Col. iv. 10—11. St. Paul mentions those of the circumcision, who were his fellow-labourers at Rome, in preaching the Gospel: but he says not a single word of St. Peter, whose name in that place especially could not have been omitted, if St. Peter had been in Rome.

Among those who were present at the effusion of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost, which followed Christ's ascension, we find some 'strangers of Rome'. That these persons, who expressed a devout admiration of what they had seen and heard, related the whole on their return to Italy, and made known the doctrines of Christianity in their own country is highly probable.

probable. After this, many Christians, who had been converted elsewhere, may be supposed on their journey to the capital of the world to have communicated still further knowledge of Christianity, and in this manner to have laid the foundation of a Christian community in Rome. Indeed it is certain, from the sixteenth chapter of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, that there were many firm Christians at that time in Rome, with whom St. Paul had been acquainted in other places. Among these are particularly to be noted,

1. Aquilas and Priscilla, who had attended St. Paul several years partly at Corinth, partly at Ephesus, who had instructed Apollos in the doctrine of Christ, and who, on their return to Rome, made their own house a place of assembly for a part of the Christian community in that city, ver. 3—5.

2. Andronicus and Junius, who had formerly been fellow-prisoners with St. Paul on account of the Gospel, and had been converted to Christianity before him, ver. 7. St. Paul calls them persons 'of note among the Apostles,' by which he means not Apostles of Christ, but Apostles, or envoys from Christian communities<sup>w</sup>. As they were Jews by birth, it is not improbable that they were deputed to Rome from the church at Jerusalem, in order to establish the Jewish converts at Rome in the Christian doctrines, and to preach the Gospel.

3. Rufus, ver. 13. whose father had assisted in carrying the cross of Christ, Mark xv. 21.

4. The Christian religion had been received in some of the principal houses in Rome, for instance in those of Aristobulus and Narcissus, ver. 10—11. It is true, that the masters of the families are not saluted, but only those of the household: but under these we must not reckon merely abject slaves according to the modern acceptation of this term, for in the great houses at Rome they, who

<sup>w</sup> See my first Note to the Epistle to the Galatians. Compare also 2 Cor. viii. 23. Philipp. ii. 25. Acts xv. 25.

who bore this name were frequently men of great importance. Of Aristobulus we have no knowledge : but Narcissus, whose household St. Paul salutes, is perhaps the same person as the freedman of Claudius of this name, who stood in high estimation with the Emperor, and was appointed his cabinet-secretary. The moral character of this man was not the best, and therefore it was no loss to Christianity, that he was not among the members of the Christian community in Rome.

Under these circumstances, it is not extraordinary that, when St. Paul wrote his Epistle to the Romans, Christianity was in a flourishing state there. But, as they had hitherto received a visit from no Apostle, none of them could have received the gifts of the Holy Ghost, except those who had been either at Jerusalem, or in other places where Apostles resided. For this reason St. Paul says, ch. i. 11. that he longed to see them, that he might impart to them some spiritual gifts<sup>x</sup>.

### SECT. III.

*Of the false notions, which some of the Jews entertained concerning Justification.*

**I**N the Epistle to the Romans St. Paul alludes very little to local circumstances, because he had never been in Rome, and was therefore less acquainted with their peculiar situation, than with the situation of those communities, which he himself had founded. It is properly a didactic or doctrinal Epistle, and will be best understood by knowing what erroneous notions the Jews had of justification, and of the election of their nation, and how they were affected toward the Roman magistrates.

<sup>x</sup> See my note to 2 Tim. i. 6. In the commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, which I intend to publish, more will be said on this subject, in the note to the passage in question.

trates. We are more concerned at present with the erroneous, than with the right notions of the Jews: yet we must not consider the errors, which we have now to examine, as common to the whole nation, for even in the Talmud we sometimes find remains of the most orthodox theology. They were chiefly maintained by the most zealous among the Pharisees, especially by those who were attached to the party of Judas Galilæus.

In regard to the doctrine of justification it must be previously observed, that not even the Pharisees or any Jew whatsoever who was considered as orthodox, understood it in such a manner, as to denote that a man could be justified by a perfect obedience to the law. The whole Jewish church unanimously confessed that no man was exempt from sin. This therefore could not possibly be the doctrine combated by St. Paul. Nor could any Jew, who passed for orthodox in Palestine, have imagined that his former sins were forgiven, merely in consequence of his endeavours to lead a new life: for he knew that God had appointed sacrifice for sins, and had promised forgiveness in consequence of the sacrifice. It could not therefore be the design of St. Paul to shew, that we may obtain remission of sins by a subsequent course of piety, and obedience to the moral law. Indeed, had this been his design, he would have been at a loss for arguments to prove it.

The Jews assigned three grounds of justification.

1. 'The extraordinary piety and merits of their ancestors, and the covenant made by God with those holy men.' Among these holy ancestors they reckoned not only Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, according to Scripture, but likewise the twelve patriarchs, though the actions of some of these twelve patriarchs, according to the relation of Moses, were of such a kind, as would have been punished in the present age with imprisonment, or even with death. Very unreasonable terms were thus offered to the deity, in order to claim justification. Further, they thought the piety of their early ancestors so very extraordinary, and considered the painful circumcision of  
Abraham



Abraham in his advanced age so meritorious a work, without any obligation from the law of nature, that God could not hate the children of such pious parents. And, as God had made a covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and had promised to bless their prosperity, it was thought that this covenant obliged him to forgive their sins. I will quote a few passages to this purpose, which I have partly collected myself, and partly have borrowed from Whitby.

We read in Hof. iii. 2. ‘I have bought her (the woman whom Hosea married, and who was supposed to be a type of the people of Israel) to me for fifteen pieces of silver, for a homer<sup>v</sup> of barley, and a half-homer of barley.’ On this passage Kimchi comments thus. ‘Some interpret this of the merits of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and the twelve patriarchs.’ And of the homer and half-homer he says, ‘These are fifteen ephahs, which denote Moses, Aaron, Miriam, and the twelve patriarchs.’

Pococke, in his *Miscellanea*, p. 170, 227. has shewn, that the Jews believed, that the fire of hell had no effect on any one of their nation, because Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob came down to deliver them. This superstitious notion has been adopted from the Jews by the Mohammedans, who in contradiction to the Koran believe that at the day of judgement, Christ, David, and Moses, will by their intercession deliver those from hell, who have believed in their doctrine, even after it had been abolished by Mohammed. One of the principal maxims of the Jews is כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל יֵשׁ לְדֹם חֶלֶק לְעוֹלָם הַבָּא, that is, ‘all Israel partakes of eternal life:’ and with this maxim begins the book called *Pirke Aboth*. Another of the Jewish doctrines is, ‘God promised to Abraham, that if his children were wicked, he would consider them as righteous on account of the sweet odour of his circumcised foreskin<sup>z</sup>.’

The

<sup>v</sup> A homer contained ten epaphs.

<sup>z</sup> *Pugio fidei*, P. III. Dis. III. cap. 16, sect. 36—37.

The same is objected to the Jews by Justin Martyr<sup>a</sup>; ‘Your Rabbins deceive themselves and us in imagining that the kingdom of heaven is prepared for all those, who are the natural seed of Abraham, even though they be finners and unbelievers.’

The Jews even go so far as to pray in the name of their ancestors, whose merits they plead before God. The words of the Hebrew, Psalm lxxxiv. 9. which signify literally, ‘Behold our shield,’ are rendered in the Chaldee paraphrase ‘Behold the merits of our fathers:’ and the words of Isaiah, ch. xlv. 5. ‘another shall call himself by the name of Jacob,’ are translated both by Jonathan and in the Septuagint ‘He shall pray in the name of Jacob.’ See also what Wetstein has said on this subject in his note to Matth. iii. 9.

St. Paul, in the ninth chapter of his Epistle to the Romans, has given a complete confutation of this erroneous notion, and has shewn that the promises of God were not made to all, but only to the faithful descendants of Abraham. The latter half of the fifth chapter is likewise to the same purpose, where St. Paul confirms the assertion, which he made ch. iii. 29—30. that God was equally the God of the Jews and of the Gentiles: and shews that, as all men, both Jews and Gentiles, incurred death by the guilt of one common father, or head of his covenant with mankind, whom they did not elect, but receive from God, so it is just that, when God determined to have mercy, he should restore life both to Jews and Gentiles by the common head of the new covenant.

2. Another ground of justification, according to the opinion of the Jews, was ‘the knowledge, which they had of God through the law of Moses, and their diligence in the study of that law.’ Now it is true that in one respect the Jews had an advantage above the Gentiles: but then they estimated this advantage so highly, as to make it a plea for the remission of their sins. St. Paul therefore found it necessary to prove at large in the second chapter, that man is justified, not by the knowledge, but by the observance of the law.

3. A

3. A third ground of justification was ‘the works of the Levitical law,’ which were to expiate sin. Among these works they reckoned sacrifices, to which God had promised remission of sins, and circumcision. In opposition to this St. Paul teaches, that the Levitical law does not expiate, but only reveal sin; and that it exemplifies on the sacrificed beasts the punishment, which is due to the sinner, ch. iii. 20. v. 20.

The inference, which the Jews deduced from the preceding doctrines, is obvious, namely, that they had much easier access to justification, than the Gentiles; and that the Gentiles, if they wished to be justified and be saved, must receive the law of Moses,

## SECT. IV.

*Of the notions entertained by the Jews concerning Election.*

THE question relative to predestination and election, which St. Paul discusses in the ninth, tenth, and eleventh chapters of the Epistle to the Romans, is totally different from that, which has engaged the attention of Christians from the time of Augustin, and separates at present the Lutheran from the Calvinist church. The greatest confusion therefore would be occasioned in the study of the Epistle to the Romans, if we applied to the modern controversy on predestination and election what St. Paul has written in this Epistle against the Jewish notions, which had no resemblance to any of the opinions maintained by Christian polemics. God had promised Abraham to bless his seed, to give it not only the true and spiritual blessing, but likewise the land of Canaan, to suffer it to dwell there in prosperity, and to consider it as his church upon earth. This promise the Jews extended to their whole nation, and asserted that God was bound to fulfil it toward every Jew, as being a

descendant of Abraham, whatever his principles, or whatever his conduct might be. This pretension was not only groundless, but inconsistent : for the Ishmaelites and the Edomites were equally descended from Abraham, and yet the Jews themselves acknowledged that these had no claim to the divine promises, especially to the promise of the land of Canaan. Nor could they deny, that in the time of Isaiah the greatest part of their nation had been destroyed by the Assyrians, without any violation of the promises which had been made to them. Hence St. Paul argues in the ninth chapter, that God would still adhere to his promises, if he received only those as the chosen seed, who believed in Christ, and condemned all those who disbelieved.

The Jews went even so far as to assert that, if a prophet, were inspired with prophecies unfavourable to their nation, he ought not to pronounce them, and that he was bound to resist the will of God, by praying, like Moses, that his name might rather be expunged from the book of the living. It was on this account, that St. Paul, in the five first verses of the ninth chapter, makes so cautious and almost timorous a transition to the question, which he was going to discuss.

As it may appear incredible, that such doctrines could be maintained by the Jews, I will briefly quote what Kimchi has written as an explanation of Hos. i. 2. ‘ Our Rabbies relate on occasion of the words, *and the Lord said to Hosea*, that the Holy and Ever-blessed said to Hosea, the Israelites have sinned.’ He ought to have answered, O Lord of the world, they are thy children, the children of thy chosen, the children of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob ; have mercy on them. But he not only neglected to speak thus, but even said the whole world is thine, exchange them for another people.

‘ Then the Holy and Ever-blessed said, what shall I do with this old man ? I will say to him, take thee a harlot : and again I will say to him, put her away from thee.’ If he can do this, I will also separate myself from Israel<sup>b</sup>.

Now,

<sup>b</sup> It is to be observed that in the mean time Hosea prophesied for some years against the Israelites, till three children were born to him.



Now, after she had brought him forth two sons and a daughter, the Holy and Ever-blessed said to him, Hosea, oughtest thou not to learn from thy master, Moses? After I had spoken to him, he separated himself from his wife : do thou also separate thyself from thine. Hosea, answered, O Lord of the world, I have children by her, and cannot possibly put her away. Then said the Holy and Ever-blessed, canst thou not do this, Hosea, though she is an harlot, and thy children are the children of an harlot? So also is it with me : the children of Israel are my children, the children of my chosen, of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and they are one of my three possessions, and yet thou hast said, exchange them for another people.

‘ As soon as Hosea perceived that he had sinned, he begged for mercy. But the Holy and Ever-blessed spake : when thou prayest for mercy, pray for mercy on Israel. From that moment he began to bless, and said : the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea<sup>c</sup>.’

These Jewish errors illustrate at once the very difficult ninth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, in which St. Paul had no other object in view, than to shew, that God was not obliged to bestow happiness here and hereafter on the unbelieving Jews : and that he could as well permit them to harden their hearts, and provoke his judgments, without violating his word, as he had formerly done in regard to Pharaoh.

## S E C T. V.

*Of the sentiments of the Jews, concerning obedience to the Roman Emperor.*

**I**T is well known that the Pharisees, at least those of the party of Judas Galilæus, were not well affected to foreign magistrates, and that from a false interpretation of

<sup>c</sup> This whole story is taken from the book פסחא, Chap. Haisha,

of Deut. xvii. 15. they thought it unlawful to pay tribute to the Roman Emperor, and to acknowledge him for their sovereign<sup>d</sup>. And as the Jews in general expected a Messiah who would establish a temporal kingdom, and free them from the dominion of the Romans<sup>e</sup>, this expectation made them ripe for rebellion, and ready at all times to throw off the yoke. Even the Jews at Rome had already begun to create disturbances, which occasioned the command of the Emperor Claudius, that all the Jews should leave Rome, of which mention is briefly made by St. Luke, in Acts xviii. 2. Suetonius, in his Life of Claudius, ch. 25, writes, ‘Judæos, impulsore Chresto, assidue tumultuantes<sup>f</sup> Roma expulit.’ By ‘Chrestus’ Suetonius meant ‘Christus’, not knowing the meaning of the word, and supposing, that it was written in Greek *Χρῆστος*. Yet he certainly did not speak of the Christians, and intend to accuse the followers of Jesus Christ of sedition: for they submitted peaceably to the Roman magistrates, and even if they had been inclined to sedition, they were not sufficiently numerous, nor sufficiently powerful at Rome in the time of Claudius to make the least opposition. By ‘Judæi’ therefore we must understand Jews in the strict sense of the word: and ‘Chrestus’ that is, ‘Christus,’ denotes, not the person of Jesus Christ, but the Messiah expected by the Jews, and which they called in Greek *Χριστός*, and in Latin ‘Christus.’ The Jews therefore being excited to sedition from an expectation of support from their ‘Christus,’ Claudius and his ministers imagined that this was a real person then living in some place out of Rome, who excited the Jews to insurrection. This is what Suetonius meant in describing them as ‘impulsore Chresto tumultuantes.’ However the banishment, which followed this insurrection, appears not to have lasted long,

<sup>d</sup> Compare Matth. xxii. 15—22. with Joseph. Antiq. Lib. XVII. c. 2.

<sup>e</sup> Joseph. Bell. Jud. Lib. VII. 31. Suetonius in Vespas. cap. 4. Taciti Hist. Lib. II. 5.

<sup>f</sup> See Gesner’s Thesaurus, under the word Tumultus.

long, and it either terminated with the death of Claudius, or the decree was revoked during his life: for Aquilas the Jew, who met St. Paul at Corinth, after he had left Rome in consequence of this decree, was already returned to Rome, when St. Paul wrote his Epistle to the Romans. From what has been said in this paragraph, it is obvious how necessary those exhortations to obedience were, which the Apostle has given in the thirteenth chapter.

Whoever is conversant with the Roman history, will be able to illustrate many single passages in this chapter. The city of Rome contained within itself the seeds of insurrection and civil war, and was frequently involved in troubles, even when the provinces were at peace. The Senate was secretly jealous of the Emperor, and the Emperor in his turn suspected the Senate. The life of the Emperor was seldom free from danger: Caligula had died a violent death, Claudius had been poisoned, and Nero, who was on the throne, when St. Paul wrote this Epistle, did not meet with a more fortunate end. The inferior magistrates aspired to the supremacy: and as the Romans then believed in astrology, which they had learned from the Chaldees, an astrologer had only to predict success to the aspiring party, or to foretel the day, on which the Emperor would die, and the consequence was a certain assassination. The imperial life-guard, which consisted of foreigners, especially of Germans, and therefore was not interested in the prosperity of the Empire, was not only an object of disgust to the Roman citizens, but became so powerful after the time of Claudius, that the Emperors were obliged to purchase its favour by considerable presents. And in fact they had no other right to their sovereignty over the Romans, than that which they derived either from force or intrigue. Under these circumstances, St. Paul judged it necessary to exhort the Roman Christians to submit peaceably to the government, under which they lived. He tells them that ‘the powers that be (*αἱ ἐσασαυ* *ἐξουσίαι*) are ordained of God:’ he will not consent, that

they should enter into any inquiries on the origin of that right, which was exercised by the Emperor, but commands them to obey the constituted authorities, as appointed agreeably to the divine will, and not to associate with those, who endeavoured to effect a change in the government <sup>s</sup>.

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## S E C T. VI.

### *Contents of the Epistle to the Romans.*

THE contents of the Epistle to the Romans may be reduced to the following heads :

1. The usual salutation, with which the Greeks began their letters, ch. i. 1—7. On this occasion, St. Paul particularly describes his apostolical office, because the authority of this Epistle depended on it.

2. St. Paul endeavours, ch. i. 8—16. to pave the way for the subject, which he is about to discuss. He expresses his joy at the flourishing state of the Christian community in Rome, and his desire to come thither, and preach the Gospel, of which he was not ashamed, in the face of the whole world. After this he insensibly introduces the principal point, which he intended to prove, namely,

3. The subject of the Gospel, ver. 16, 17. This reveals a righteousness unknown before, which is derived solely from faith, and to which the Jews and Gentiles have an equal claim.

4. In order to prove this point he shews, ch. i. 18.—iii. 20, that both Jews and Gentiles are under sin, that is, that God will impute their sins to Jews, as well as to Gentiles. Here, it must not be imagined, that St. Paul meant

<sup>s</sup> Qui res novas moliantur, according to the phrase used by the Romans.



meant by a chain of conclusions to prove, what every man's experience will suggest to him, that Jews and Gentiles have sinned : his intention was to prove that God will call the Jews to an account for their sins, and consequently, that they stand in need of justification by faith.

His proof of this position may be reduced to the following syllogisms. 'The wrath of God is revealed against those, who hold the truth in unrighteousness, that is, who acknowledge the truth and yet sin against it, ch. i. 18.

'The Gentiles acknowledged truths, but partly by their idolatry, and partly by their other detestable vices they sinned against the truths, which they acknowledged, ch. i. 19—31.

'Therefore the wrath of God is revealed against the Gentiles, and punishes them.

'The Jews have acknowledged more truths than the Gentiles, and yet they sin, ch. ii. 1. 17—24.

'Therefore the Jewish sinners are still more exposed to the wrath of God,' ch. ii. 1—12.

Having thus proved his point he answers the following objections, which might be made to it.

Obj. 1. 'The Jews were well grounded in their knowledge, and studied the law.' St. Paul answers; If a knowledge of the law, without the performance of it, could justify, God would not have condemned the Gentiles, who knew the law by nature, ch. ii. 13—16.

Obj. 2. 'The Jews were circumcised.' Answer. That is, they were admitted by an outward sign to a covenant with God : but this sign will not avail those, who violate the covenant, ch. ii. 25—29.

Obj. 3. 'According to this doctrine of St. Paul, the Jews have no advantages above the Gentiles, which is manifestly false.' Answer. They still have advantages, for to them were committed the oracles of God : but their privileges do not extend so far, that God should overlook their sins, which the Scripture earnestly condemns even in Jews, ch. iii. 1—19.

Obj. 4. 'They had the Levitical law, and sacrifices.'  
 Answer. Hence is no remission, but only the knowledge of sin<sup>h</sup>, ch. iii. 20.

5. From the preceding arguments St. Paul infers that Jews and Gentiles must be justified by the same means, namely, without the Levitical law, through faith in Christ: and in opposition to the imaginary advantages of the Jews, he states the declaration of Zechariah, that God is not the God of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles, ch. iii. 21—31.

6. As the whole blessing was promised to those, who were the faithful descendants of Abraham, whom both Scripture and the Jews call his children, he proves his former assertion from the example of Abraham; who was an idolater before his call, but was declared just by God, on account of his faith, long before his circumcision. Hence St. Paul takes occasion to explain the nature, and the fruits of faith, ch. iv. 1.—v. 11.

7. He proceeds to prove from the equity of God, that the Jews had no advantages above the Gentiles, in respect to justification. Both Jews and Gentiles had foretold life and immortality, through the common father of the human race, whom they themselves had not chosen as their representative. If therefore it was the will of God to restore immortality by a new spiritual head of a covenant, which was Christ, it was equitable that Jews and Gentiles should have an equal share in the advantages to be derived from this new representative of the human race, ch. v. 12—21.

8. He shews, that the doctrine of justification, as he had stated it, lays us under the strictest obligations to holiness, ch. vi. 1—23.

9. He shews that since the death of Christ we are no longer concerned with the law of Moses. For our justification arises from our appearing in the sight of God, as if we were actually dead with Christ on account of our sins: but the law of Moses was not given to the dead. On this occasion he evinces at large, that the preceding  
 consideration

\* See my Note to Gal. iii. 19.

consideration does not affect the eternal power of God over us, and that while we are under the law of Moses, we become perpetually subject to death, even for sins of inadvertency, ch. vii. 1—25.

10. From these premises he concludes, that all those, and those only, who are united with Christ, and for the sake of this union live not according to the flesh, are free from the condemnation of the law, and have an undoubted right to eternal life, ch. viii. 1—17.

11. Having described the happiness of all such persons, he is aware that the Jews, who expected temporal blessings, would object to him, that the Christians, notwithstanding what he had said, still endured many sufferings in this world. This objection he obviates, ch. viii. 18—39.

12. He shews, that God is not, the less true and faithful, because he does not justify, but rather rejects and punishes the Jews, who would not believe in the Messiah, ch. ix. x. xi. His discourse on this subject is arranged as follows :

A. The introduction, in which he displays the utmost caution, ch. ix. 1—5.

B. The dissertation itself, which consists of three principal parts.

a). St. Paul shews that the promises of God were never made to all the posterity of Abraham : that God always reserved to himself the power of choosing those sons of Abraham, whom for Abraham's sake he intended to bless, and of punishing the wicked sons of Abraham : and that in respect to temporal happiness or misery, even their good or ill conduct did not determine his choice. Thus Ishmael, Esau, the Israelites in the desert in the time of Moses, and the greater part of that nation in the time of Isaiah, were rejected and made a sacrifice of his justice, ch. ix. 6—29.

b.) He shews, that God had reason to reject most of the Jews then living, because they would not believe

believe in the Messiah, though the Gospel had been plainly preached to them, ch. ix. 30.—x. 21.

c). Yet God rejected not all his people, but was still fulfilling his promises on many thousand natural descendants of Abraham, who believed in the Messiah, and at a future period would fulfil them upon more, since all Israel would be converted, ch. xi.

11—32.

C. The conclusion, in which the Apostle expresses his admiration of the wise counsels of God, ch. xi. 33—36.

13. From the doctrines hitherto laid down, and particularly from this, that God has in his mercy accepted the Gentiles, he argues that the Romans should consecrate and offer themselves wholly to God. This leads him to mention in particular some Christian duties, ch. xii.

14. He exhorts them to be subject to the magistrates, ch. xiii. 1—7.

15. He recommends brotherly love, ver. 8—10.

16. He commands them to abstain from those vices, which the heathens considered as matters indifferent, ver. 11—14.

17. He exhorts the Jews and Gentiles in the Christian church to brotherly unity, ch. xiv. 1.—xv. 3. The Christian community in Rome appears to have been divided into parties, who purposely assembled in separate places of worship. But on this subject I shall say more, in my Notes to this Epistle.

18. He concludes, with an apology for having ventured to admonish the Romans, whom he had not converted; with an account of his intended journey to Jerusalem; and with salutations to those persons, whom he intended to recommend to public notice, ch. xv. 14.—xvi. 27. In respect to the salutations, it will be necessary to make the following remark:

When St. Paul desires a Christian community to salute certain members in his name, he thereby insinuates that he esteems those persons as his particular friends, and recommends



recommends them to the church. In the Epistle to the Romans this appears more clearly than in any other of St. Paul's Epistles : for he not only bestows particular commendations on most of those, whom he salutes, but in the midst of his salutations he introduces a warning against those, whose society was to be avoided, ch. xvi. 17—20. Hence we see, that not even the salutations in St. Paul's Epistles were unworthy of a divine inspiration, or the direction of the Holy Spirit.

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## CHAP. XVII.

GENERAL REMARKS ON SOME OF THE EPISTLES  
WRITTEN BY ST. PAUL DURING HIS IMPRISON-  
MENT IN ROME; AND ON THE IMPRISONMENT  
ITSELF.

## SECT. I.

*The Epistles to the Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon, were written by St. Paul, while he was prisoner in Rome, and were dispatched at the same time.*

AFTER St. Paul had written his Epistle to the Romans, he went to Jerusalem, where he was apprehended by the Jews, and was with difficulty rescued by the Roman guard. On this occasion however he was deprived of his liberty, and after a tedious imprisonment was sent to Rome, where he arrived in the spring of the year 61. During his confinement in Rome, which was not a very close one, he wrote about the same time his Epistles to the Ephesians, to the Colossians, to Philemon, and also that to the Philippians. This circumstance of time it will be necessary to prove.

That the Epistle to the Colossians was dispatched at the same time with the Epistle to Philemon, is evident  
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from Col. iv. 9. Onesimus, a slave who had deserted his master Philemon, was converted by St. Paul then a prisoner in Rome, and sent back to his master with a letter from the Apostle. Now St. Paul says to the Colossians, ch. iv. 7—9. ‘All my state shall Tychicus declare unto you, who is a beloved brother, and a faithful minister and fellow servant in the Lord: whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose, that ye might know your estate, and comfort your hearts, with Onesimus, a faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you. They shall make known unto you all things, which are done here.’ It is certain therefore that St. Paul wrote the Epistle to the Colossians immediately before the departure of Onesimus from Rome, and therefore at the same time, that he wrote to Philemon. Between the Epistle to the Colossians and that to the Ephesians there is so great a similarity, not only in the sentiments, but in the very expressions, that we must conclude they were written about the same time, or so near to each other, that the expressions, which the Apostle had used in the former, were fresh in his memory, when he wrote the latter<sup>i</sup>. Further, the circumstances attending both  
Epistles

<sup>i</sup> To this argument, which other commentators have used before me, Dr. Lardner in his Supplement, Vol. II. p. 214—216. makes the three following objections, which in my opinion do not weaken its force.

1. ‘It is likely that the Apostle kept copies of his letters. If so, it might be easy for him to write after the same manner at different times, to people not very remote from each other, and whose circumstances were much alike. Indeed without keeping copies of his letters, it would be no difficult matter for St. Paul to repeat the Christian principles, and exhortations to Christian virtues, in like expressions, if the circumstances required it.

Ans. That this would have afforded no difficulty to St. Paul, if he had actually designed it, I readily grant: but I cannot conceive what end it could have answered, designedly to have used the same expressions in two different letters. Agreement in expressions arises seldom from a real intention, but generally from the circumstance, that those which we have used last, present themselves unsought, and sometimes against our inclination, when we again write on the same subject.

2. ‘Though there is a resemblance between these two Epistles, they are very different. For the Epistle to the Ephesians is a good  
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Epistles are precisely the same. Both of them were written by St. Paul as a prisoner. That this is true of the Epistle to the Colossians is evident, because in his Epistle to Philemon, which was written at the same time, he says of Onesimus, ver. 10. Οὐ ἐγεννησά ἐν τοῖς δεσμοῖς μὲ<sup>k</sup>, and that he was likewise a prisoner when he wrote his Epistle to the Ephesians is certain from what the Apostle himself says, ch. iii. 1. iv. 1. vi. 20. But, what is still more decisive, the very same person, namely Tychicus, who carried the Epistle to the Ephesians, carried also the Epistle to the Colossians, as appears from Ephes. vi. 21. Col. iv. 7. As Ephesus lay on the sea coast, and Colossæ at some distance from it, it is probable that Tychicus landed at Ephesus, and having delivered the Epistle to the Christian community in that city, continued his route to Colossæ, in company with Onesimus, who went with him from Rome, and  
is

deal longer than that to the Colossians: and in those places, where there is an agreement, there are differences.

Ans. This objection is foreign to the purpose: for when it is said that expressions used in one Epistle occur in writing another, which is sent at the same time, it is not meant that these two Epistles will be in all respects alike, or copies of each other.

3. 'Nor is there in the Epistle to the Ephesians any notice taken of Timothy, or Epaphras, or Mark, so expressly mentioned in the Epistle to the Colossians: which must be reckoned a very strong, and even demonstrative argument, that these two Epistles were not written and sent away at the same time.'

Ans. But this argument is no more demonstrative, than the preceding. For St. Paul in his Epistle to the Ephesians has sent no salutations whatever, and therefore no inference can be drawn from the omission of any one name in particular. It is true, that he might have mentioned the name of Timothy after his own, at the beginning of the Epistle: but various causes might have contributed to this omission, even though Timothy were then in Rome: for instance, that Timothy was not the person to whom St. Paul dictated the Epistle to the Ephesians, or that Timothy had written to them himself, or (what is probably the true cause) that this Epistle was intended, as will appear in the sequel, not only for the Ephesians, but for several other churches in Asia Minor, with which Timothy was unacquainted.

<sup>k</sup> See also ver. 13.

is mentioned in the Epistle to the Colossians, as the attendant of Tychicus on his journey thither.

I am sensible that many commentators are of a different opinion: but I hope their principal doubts are removed by what I have said concerning the journey of Tychicus. Whoever wishes to be acquainted with what other writers have said on this subject, and with the grounds of their opinions, may consult the Prolegomena to the Epistle to the Ephesians, in Wolfii Curæ philologicæ et criticæ.

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## SECT. II.

*Examination of the question, whether St. Paul was twice prisoner in Rome: and if he was, in which of the two imprisonments these Epistles were written.*

**I**T is the common opinion that St. Paul was twice prisoner in Rome, that the first ended with restoration to his liberty, and the second with death, which he suffered by the sword. If this be true, the question occurs, in which of the two imprisonments did St. Paul write these, and some other Epistles hereafter to be mentioned<sup>1</sup>? But before this question be examined, it is necessary to inquire whether the opinion, that St. Paul was twice prisoner in Rome, which many deny, is really grounded.

It must be admitted that no historian contemporary with St. Paul has made the least mention of his having been twice in Rome, that is, of his having left Rome, at the end of the imprisonment recorded by St. Luke in the last chapter of the Acts, and his afterwards returning thither. The earliest writer, who has spoken of this journey,

<sup>1</sup> This question particularly concerns the Epistle to the Hebrews, as will be afterwards shewn.



journey, is Eusebius, who lived in the fourth century; and even Eusebius gives it only as a report, for instead of relating it as an undoubted fact, he introduces it with the expression, *λογος εχει*. It is true that he endeavours to corroborate the report by an appeal to 2 Tim. iv. 16.: but the argument, which he builds on this passage, is without foundation. Omitting therefore his remarks, I will quote only what is to our present purpose<sup>m</sup>. *Τοτε μεν εν απολογησαμενον αυθις επι την τε κηρυγματος διακονιαν λογος εχει σειλασθαι τον Αποστολον, δευτερον δ' επιβαντα τη αυτη πολει τω κατ' αυτον τελειωσθαι μαρτυριω, εν ω δεσμοις εχομενος την προς Τιμοθεον δευτεραν επισολην συνταττει.* 'There is a report, that the Apostle, after he had answered the charges, which had been laid to him<sup>n</sup>, again went out to preach the Gospel: but that, when he went up a second time to the same city, he finished his life with martyrdom, and that at this time he wrote in bonds the second Epistle to Timothy.' Now a fact, recorded for the first time at least two hundred and fifty years, after it is supposed to have happened, and then given only as a report, cannot be said to rest on very strong historical evidence: and when we consider the extreme zeal and activity of St. Paul's life, it must appear very extraordinary, if he left Rome after the imprisonment recorded by St. Luke in the last chapter of the Acts, took several journeys, and then returned thither again, that not even tradition should have preserved the remembrance of any one act, which he performed in this interval. It is true, that silence in regard to any fact is no proof that it did not happen: and in the present

<sup>m</sup> Hist. Eccles. Lib. II. cap. 22.

<sup>n</sup> Eusebius here means, in the imprisonment at Rome related in the last chapter of the Acts.

<sup>o</sup> Whither, this report of the fourth century does not say. This chasm modern writers have filled up with various conjectures, and have transported St. Paul, not only to Greece, Asia, and Crete, but likewise to Spain, and even into Britain.

present instance we may account for the silence of history, because St. Luke, the only Christian historian of that age, closes his accounts with the end of the second year of that imprisonment, which St. Paul underwent at Rome, on coming from Cæsarea: and after that period we know nothing of what happened to the Christians during many years, at least not with any certainty, except from the scattered accounts of Tacitus and other heathen historians. Another objection to the opinion that St. Paul went a second time to Rome, may be made in the following manner. If St. Paul was acquitted, when he was first prisoner there, what could have induced him to expose himself again to the same danger, especially if he was acquitted in the year 65, as I shall shew in the chapter on the Epistle to the Philippians, for at the end of that year the Christians underwent a severe persecution<sup>p</sup>? But to this objection may be answered, that St. Paul had too much courage to be afraid of persecution, and that on the contrary this very circumstance would rather have induced him to return to Rome, in order to comfort and support the brethren. Or he might come again to Rome, with a design of putting the plan in execution, which he had once formed, of going to Spain<sup>q</sup>. In short, I will not deny that St. Paul really did undertake a second journey to Rome, either because I know that the motive, by which he was induced to it, or because he would have done it at the hazard of his life.

What I have hitherto said on this subject leaves the question undecided; and if no other arguments could be brought, either on the one side or the other, we should be obliged to confess our ignorance whether St. Paul was twice prisoner in Rome, or not. But though historical documents fail in this inquiry, there are certain internal marks in the Epistle to the Philippians, and in the second Epistle to Timothy, which shew

<sup>p</sup> Tacit. Annal. xv. 44.

<sup>q</sup> Rom. xv. 24.

shew that St Paul must have been confined in Rome at two separate periods. In the Epistle to the Philippians, which was written from Rome, St. Paul says, ch. i. 25. 26. *και τωτο πεποιθως οίδα, οτι μενω και συμπαραμενω πασιν υμιν, εις την υμων προκοπην και χαραν της πισεως* *ινα το καυχημα υμων περισσευη εν Χριστω Ιησω εν εμοι, δια της εμης παρρησιας παλιν προς υμας.* Here St. Paul assures the Philippians that he intended to visit them, and speaks so confidently, using the strong expression *πεποιθως οίδα*, that whoever admits St. Paul's divine inspiration must conclude, that the Apostle spake here with a prophetic spirit, and consequently, that he was afterwards released from that imprisonment, in which he was then writing. The second Epistle to Timothy furnishes a stronger proof : for there are several passages in it, from which real historical arguments may be deduced. But the consideration of these arguments I shall reserve for Ch. xxii. Sect. 2.

Before I conclude this article, I must take notice however of an objection, which may be made to the opinion, that St. Paul left Rome after his first arrival there, because this objection, like the argument in the preceding paragraph, is founded on St. Paul's gift of prophecy. When the Apostle took leave of the elders of the church of Ephesus, on that journey to Jerusalem, which ended with his imprisonment, and his removal to Cæsarea, and afterwards to Rome, he said to them, ' Now behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more : ' on which they burst into tears, ' sorrowing for the words, that they should see his face no more <sup>s</sup>. ' Now this pathetic declaration St. Paul appears to have made in a spirit of prophecy : and therefore we must conclude, that he never did see the elders of the church of Ephesus again. But in his second Epistle to Timothy, which was written from Rome, St. Paul speaks, ch. iv. 13. 20. of his having been lately in Asia Minor. Consequently, if we assume a second imprisonment in Rome, and sup-

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<sup>r</sup> Acts xx. 25.

<sup>s</sup> Ver. 38.

pose, that he was not only set at liberty at the end of the imprisonment related by St. Luke<sup>†</sup>, but that he returned thither some years afterwards, was again imprisoned, and in *that* imprisonment wrote his second Epistle to Timothy, it necessarily follows, that in the interval, which elapsed between the two imprisonments, St. Paul had taken another journey into Asia Minor, after his solemn farewell of the Ephesian elders. But this objection will cease to be of importance, as soon as we reflect, that a return into Asia Minor does not necessarily imply a return to the city of Ephesus in particular. Among the cities of Asia Minor, which St. Paul in the fourth chapter of his second Epistle to Timothy mentions as having lately visited, Ephesus is not named, as one of them. He speaks only of Troas, and Miletus<sup>‡</sup>: if we conclude therefore that he was likewise at Ephesus, the conclusion is without foundation. In his Epistle to the Ephesians, which was written from Rome, he gave them no promise that he would return to them: though in his Epistle to Philemon, which was written at the same time, he expressed his intention of visiting the church at Colossæ, for which he was under some anxiety, because he had never been there in person, and for that purpose desired Philemon, ver. 22. to prepare for him a lodging. Further, in his second Epistle to Timothy, ch. iv. 20. he speaks of Trophimus, who was an Ephesian, and whom he had left sick behind him; but Trophimus was left at Miletus, not at Ephesus. We have no reason whatever therefore for supposing that St. Paul in travelling from Rome into Asia Minor went to Ephesus: and consequently his solemn farewell of the Ephesian elders is no argument that he never returned into any other part of that country.

<sup>†</sup> Acts xxviii.

<sup>‡</sup> 2 Tim. iv. 13. 20.



## C H A P. XVIII.

## OF THE EPISTLE TO PHILEMON.

**P**HILEMON appears to have been a man of substance at Colossæ, who had a spacious house, in which not only a part of the Christian community in that city assembled<sup>w</sup>, but likewise travelling Christians were entertained<sup>x</sup>. He had therefore an ecclesiastical office, and was deacon, when St. Paul calls him, ver. 1. his fellow-labourer. From this title, Hoffmann, in his *Introduct. ad Lectio. Ep. ad Colossenses*, § 18. concludes that Philemon was bishop of Colossæ, as some of the ancients pretend, especially the author of the work called the *Apostolic Constitutions*<sup>y</sup>. But Philemon, even as deacon, was a fellow-labourer of St. Paul; and therefore there is no necessity, on account of this appellation, for making him a bishop. The assertion of the fathers is in this case of no value: for those, whom they called the first bishops of the Christian churches, were generally bishops of their own creation. But, setting this title aside, he appears to have been one of the first converts in the Colossian community, and to have learnt the doctrines of Christianity, not from Epaphras, as the other Colossians had done, but from St. Paul himself<sup>z</sup>. As St. Paul had not been at Colossæ, it is probable that Philemon came to him, while he resided at Ephesus. Archippus, the son of Philemon, to whom this Epistle, which is of the familiar kind, is likewise addressed, had shortly before been appointed deacon in the church of Colossæ, as we see from Col. iv. 17. but not bishop, as Jerom pretends. St. Paul makes honourable mention of him, and calls him, not merely his fellow-labourer, but his fellow-soldier.

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<sup>w</sup> See my third Note to this Epistle.<sup>x</sup> See ver. 22.<sup>y</sup> *Constit. Apost. Lib. VII. c. 46.*<sup>z</sup> Ver. 19.

What became of Onesimus is not known: but whoever wishes to know what has been conjectured by various writers on this subject may consult the remarks on the tenth verse of this Epistle in Wolfii Curæ.

## CHAP. XIX.

## OF THE EPISTLE TO THE COLOSSIANS.

## S E C T. I.

*Of the situation of Colossæ, and the circumstances of the Christian community in that city.*

COLOSSÆ was a city of Phrygia, situate at the conflux of the Lycus and the Meander<sup>a</sup>. By what name it is called at present, I know not: for Chonus, or Konus, which is supposed to be the same as Colossæ, is more probably the same as Conium mentioned by Pliny, and clearly distinguished by him from Colossæ<sup>b</sup>. In the time of Herodotus it was a large city, and it is described as such also by Xenophon: but in the time of St. Paul it must have lost much of its ancient greatness, for Strabo<sup>c</sup> reckons it among the *πολισμοι*, or small towns of Phrygia, in opposition to the great cities, among which he places the neighbouring city Laodicea. Pliny<sup>d</sup> indeed reckons it among the ‘oppida celeberrima Phrygiæ.’ but by ‘oppidum’ Pliny hardly meant a great city, and if he did, his authority

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<sup>a</sup> In D’Anville’s map of Asia Minor, it will be found, as well as Laodicea and Hierapolis, which are mentioned in this Epistle, near the place where the 47th degree of longitude crosses the 38th degree of latitude.

<sup>b</sup> Pag. 290. lin. i.      <sup>c</sup> Pag. 864, or 576.      <sup>d</sup> Lib. V. § 41.

in points of geography is inferior to that of Strabo. Ptolemy has taken no notice of it, either in his catalogue of cities, or in his map. It is therefore much the smallest and most unimportant city of all those, to which the Epistles of St. Paul now extant were addressed: and hence it appears extraordinary, that in the arrangement of St. Paul's Epistles in the New Testament, the Epistle to the Colossians should have been placed before those to the Thessalonians.

It has been disputed, and the dispute is not yet determined, whether the name of this city should be written *Κολοσσαί*, with an *ο*, or *Κολασσαι* with an *α*. Herodotus, Xenophon, Pliny and Strabo write it in the former manner: but St. Paul appears to have written it according to the latter orthography. For the Codex Vaticanus, Codex Alexandrinus, and Codex Ephrem, the three most important Greek manuscripts, which contain this Epistle, have *Κολασσαι*: and to these may be added, eighteen other manuscripts quoted by Wettstein, ten quoted by Matthäi, and the second Göttingen manuscript. Origen, who is great authority, and several other fathers quoted by Wettstein and Griesbach write it in the same manner: and this orthography is likewise observed in the Coptic and both the Syriac versions. But if St. Paul really wrote *Κολασσαι*, we must suppose that it was thus written by the inhabitants themselves: for though he had never been there himself, when he wrote the Epistle, yet Onesimus and Epaphras were with him at that time, who were both of them from this place<sup>e</sup>, and therefore must have known its real name<sup>f</sup>. For this reason I wrote, in the preceding editions of this Introduction, 'Epistle to the Colassians:' but as this mode of writing met with disapprobation, as being different from the common custom, and it is of very little importance, in  
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<sup>e</sup> The Epistle was also sent by the hands of Onesimus.

<sup>f</sup> The question might be determined with greater certainty, if ancient inscriptions could be discovered in the place where this city stood. The place might be easily found, for it is clearly determined by being at the conflux of the Lycus and the Meander.

what manner the name be written, I write at present ‘*Epistle to the Colossians.*’

The Christian community in Colossæ, Laodicea, and Hierapolis, cities which lay in the neighbourhood of each other, but which have been long since destroyed, were closely connected, as may be naturally supposed from their situation, and as appears from Col. iv. 13. where all three are mentioned together. From Col. ii. 1, we see that St. Paul, when he wrote this Epistle, had been neither at Colossæ, nor at Laodicea: and therefore he was concerned for their safety, on hearing that they were in danger of being seduced by false teachers. It is true that he had twice travelled through Phrygia<sup>2</sup>: but, as this was a very extensive country, we must not infer, that he visited every city in it. Colossæ especially, as being only a small town, he might very easily have left unnoticed; and if we have any reason to wonder, it is that he did not visit Laodicea, because this was the capital of Phrygia. But if we examine a good map of Phrygia, especially that of D’Anville, we shall not think it extraordinary that St. Paul in neither of his two journeys through Phrygia went even to Laodicea: for it appears from the two passages just quoted from the Acts of the Apostles that his route lay each time through the north of Phrygia, whereas Laodicea, as well as Colossæ and Hierapolis, were situate in the southern part of that country. The first time that he went through Phrygia, (Acts xvi. 6. 7.) he came from Derbe, which was about four degrees to the east of Colossæ, and travelled through Phrygia and Galatia, the boundary of which countries is between the 39th and 40th degrees of latitude: thence he came into Mysia, which lay nearly in the same latitude, and intended to go into Bithynia, which lay to the north of Phrygia. The route therefore, which he took from Derbe, must have been through the northern part of Phrygia. On his second journey (Acts xviii. 23.) he likewise travelled through Galatia, as well as Phrygia. We must conclude therefore, that his route lay then also through the northern parts; and this is confirmed by  
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<sup>2</sup> Acts xvi. 6. xviii. 23.



what St. Luke says, ch. xix. 1. where he expressly relates that St. Paul travelled through the upper parts, (*τα ανωτερα μέρη*), that is, the northern districts of Asia Minor. But the latitude of Colossæ was about 38, and therefore one or two degrees to the south of St. Paul's road: whence it appears, that St. Paul's having twice travelled through Phrygia by no means implies that he visited Colossæ.

St. Paul himself says in his Epistle to the Colossians, ch. ii. 1. as plainly, I think, as words can imply, that when he wrote this Epistle, he had never been either at Colossæ, or at Laodicea. But Lardner, and before him Theodoret, have endeavoured to interpret this passage, so as to make it imply the contrary<sup>h</sup>. The words of St. Paul are, *Θελω γαρ ὑμας εἰδέναι ἥλικον ἀγωνα εἶχω περὶ ὑμῶν, καὶ τῶν ἐν Λαοδικείᾳ, καὶ ὅσοι ἔρχονται ἐν σαρκεῖ*. It is obvious therefore, as it appears to me at least, that the Colossians and the Laodiceans were reckoned by St. Paul among those, who had never seen him in person. But Lardner considers the latter clause as an antithesis, and as opposed to the Colossians and Laodiceans: whence he argues that these had really seen St. Paul in person. Now this interpretation does violence, not only to the grammatical construction, but likewise

<sup>h</sup> In the Supplement to his Credibility of the Gospel History, vol. II. ch. 14. Lardner has brought several arguments to prove, that St. Paul had been at Colossæ, long before he wrote this Epistle, and that he himself founded the church there. His arguments have not convinced me of the truth of this opinion: but whether it be right, or not, I leave to the decision of the reader. I must make however one observation on his ninth argument, which he deduces from Col. iii. 16, where St. Paul says: 'teaching and admonishing one another in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.' This shews, as Lardner says, that the Colossians were endowed with spiritual gifts: and that as spiritual gifts could be communicated only by Apostles, the Colossians must have received them from St. Paul. But this passage really shews no such thing: it shews that the Colossians had the power, not of making, but only of singing, spiritual songs: and if this requires a supernatural endowment, every man who sings the psalms of David must have a supernatural endowment. Besides, if the passage really implied what Lardner supposes, it would not prove that St. Paul had been at Colossæ: for some individuals of the Colossian community might have seen St. Paul in other places, and have there received from him spiritual gifts.

likewise to the whole tenor of the passage. St. Paul expresses his anxiety for the safety of those Christians, who had not been taught by him in person, and confirmed by him in faith. How then could he express an anxiety for the Colossians and Laodiceans, if he himself had actually instructed them in Christianity?

But though St. Paul had never been at Colossæ, when he wrote this Epistle, yet Christianity had long been taught, and a community of Christians established there. Who it was, that introduced it, I cannot pretend to determine: but it is not improbable that Epaphras<sup>i</sup>, mentioned, ch. i. 7. iv. 12, 13. was one of the earliest teachers<sup>k</sup>. Further, as it appears from Acts xix. 10. that during St. Paul's residence at Ephesus, many, both Jews and Greeks, came from various parts of Asia to hear the Gospel, we may suppose that several Colossians, especially Philemon, were of this number.

## S E C T. II.

*Contents, design, and occasion, of the Epistle to the Colossians.*

**T**HIS Epistle is chiefly directed against false moral doctrines, which appear to be Essene, and of which I have already treated, Ch. xiv. Sect. 2, 3. The opinion

<sup>i</sup> Epaphras must not be confounded with Epaphroditus, who was deputy from the Christian community at Philippi.

<sup>k</sup> In the preceding editions of this Introduction, I described Epaphras as the founder of the church at Colossæ; but though he was one of the earliest, and one of the principal teachers of Christianity in that city, it does not necessarily follow, that he was the person who first introduced it. As St. Paul joins the name of Timothy to his own, ch. i. 1. it is not improbable, that Timothy had taught Christianity at Colossæ. Throughout the whole of the first chapter St. Paul speaks in their joint names, and uses the plural number 'we,' except where the subject relates to his own imprisonment, and where Timothy therefore could not be included. From ch. ii. 1. he proceeds in the first person singular. Here again therefore he distinguishes what concerned only himself, from that, in which Timothy was likewise concerned.

nion of other commentators, that it was written against the Gnostics, may likewise, in some respects, be true. If we take the word 'Gnostic' in the sense in which it is used by many of the fathers, to denote one who rejected the law of Moses, who permitted the eating of meat offered to idols, and fornication, and taught the doctrine, that the world was created by a being of inferior order, it is certain that the persons, whom St. Paul opposes in his Epistle to the Colossians, were the very reverse of Gnostics. But if the word 'Gnostic' be taken to denote in general terms an adherent to the Oriental philosophy, the Essenes themselves may in this sense be called Gnostics. In ch. ii. 8. St. Paul calls the doctrine of those, who attempted to seduce the Colossians, by the name of *φιλοσοφία*. Now the doctrine, by which the Colossians were in danger of being perverted, the necessity of circumcision, related to the observance of the sabbath, abstinence from unclean meats, and the worshipping of angels. But this was the doctrine of the Essenes: and their doctrine is called by Josephus likewise by the name of Philosophy: for in his history of the Jewish war, B. II. ch. 2. § 8—13. he says, *Τρία παρὰ Ἰουδαίοις εἶδη φιλοσοφεῖται*——*τρίτον Ἐσσηνοὶ καλεῦνται*.

The contents of the Epistle to the Colossians have a remarkable affinity to those of the Epistle to the Ephesians; except that the errors, which St. Paul confutes in the latter, are more manifestly Essene, than those, which he combats in the former. Whoever would understand these Epistles must read them together; for the one is in most places a commentary on the other, the meaning of single passages in one Epistle, which alone might be variously interpreted, being determined by the parallel passages in the other Epistle. If that Epistle, for which St. Paul commands the Colossians, ch. iv. 16. to send, from Laodicea, was no other than his Epistle to the Ephesians, as I really believe, the advice which he gave was obviously founded on the necessity of the Epistle to the Ephesians, for the understanding of that, which he wrote to the Colossians.

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The question here occurs : Why did St. Paul, who, considering his very extensive connexions, was not prodigal of his Epistles, write to the Colossians, not only at the same time that he wrote to the Ephesians, but even on the same subject, especially if the Epistle to the Ephesians was a circular Epistle, intended to be sent to several cities, and among the rest to Laodicea, from which place the Colossians were ordered to procure a copy of it? Or, if he thought it necessary to write a particular Epistle to a city of Phrygia, why did he not direct it rather to Laodicea the capital, than to Colossæ a town of less note: and command the church of Laodicea to salute that at Colossæ, rather than the contrary, as he had done, Col. iv. 15. ? Would not a copy of the circular Epistle have been sufficient for the Colossians, rather than for the Laodiceans? To this we may answer, that several circumstances concurred, which induced St. Paul to write this Epistle.

1. Onesimus, whom St. Paul had converted to Christianity, and who carried the Epistle to Colossæ, was himself a Colossian. Further, Epaphras, a principal teacher of the Colossians, was likewise with St. Paul when he wrote this Epistle, ch. i. 7, 8. iv. 12, 13.

2. By the means of these two persons, especially the latter, he had probably received circumstantial accounts of the situation of the church at Colossæ, and of the erroneous opinions which prevailed there. It is even possible that the Epistle was written at the particular request of Epaphras, who was greatly interested in the welfare of the Colossian church, as well as in that of the churches in Laodicea and Hierapolis, ch. iv. 13.

3. St. Paul himself was much concerned for the Colossians, and for all the neighbouring communities, where he had not preached the Gospel in person, ch. ii. 1.

4. The Apostle appears to have had likewise in view the confirmation of that doctrine, which the Colossians had received from Epaphras, ch. i. 7, 8.

5. Though there is a great similarity between the Epistles to the Ephesians and Colossians, yet the latter



contains many things, which are not in the former, especially in regard to the worship of angels, and many other single points, which appear to be Effene, and which perhaps prevailed at Colossæ, and in its neighbourhood, more than in other places.

On the other hand, the Epistle to the Colossians contains upon the whole much less matter than the Epistle to the Ephesians. But if the latter was a circular Epistle, of which the Colossians were to procure a copy from Laodicea, there was no necessity for St. Paul to repeat, in the particular Epistle to the Colossians, what he had said in the circular Epistle, except what especially related to the necessities of the church of Colossæ. Another difference between the two Epistles consists in this, that in the Epistle to the Ephesians St. Paul not only recommends unanimity among the members of the Christian community at Ephesus, whether Jews or Gentiles, but likewise distinguishes them from each other, where he represents them as being equal in the kingdom of God, by 'ye' and 'we.' This I have not observed in the Epistle to the Colossians. Perhaps therefore the Colossian community consisted wholly of Gentile converts, which is not impossible, even though Jewish Effene doctrines had been introduced there: or, if it consisted of Jewish as well as of Gentile converts, perhaps less distinction was made at Colossæ between the two parties, than in other cities of Asia Minor.

It is remarkable that in the two Epistles to the Ephesians and Colossians, and in these only, St. Paul warns his readers against lying. Ephes. iv. 25. Col. iii. 9. Hence we may conclude, that this vice prevailed more at Ephesus and Colossæ, than in other places to which St. Paul sent Epistles: and as both of these cities lay in Asia Minor, it is not improbable, that it was the vice of the country, for this vice is often national, as the love of truth is often a national virtue. Were I an Apostle, and had to send an apostolical Epistle to England, I should think it wholly unnecessary to give  
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any directions against lying, because this vice is held in great abhorrence in England<sup>1</sup>: but there are countries in Europe, to which, if a pastoral Epistle were addressed, the mention of this vice would not be superfluous.

### S E C T. III.

*Of the Epistle, for which St. Paul desires the Colossians, Ch. iv. 16. to send from Laodicea.*

ST. PAUL desires the Colossians, ch. iv. 16. to send to Laodicea the Epistle, which they themselves had received, and to send for another from Laodicea, which was to be read also at Colossæ. The words of St. Paul are: *Και όταν αναγνωσθῇ παρ' ὑμῖν ἡ ἐπιστολὴ, ποιῆσατε ἵνα καὶ ἐν τῇ Λαοδικεῶν ἐκκλησίᾳ ἀναγνωσθῇ, καὶ τὴν ἐκ Λαοδικείας ἵνα καὶ ὑμεῖς ἀναγνῶτε.* Now the former part of this verse is clear: but it is not so clear, what Epistle St. Paul meant by *ἡ ἐπιστολὴ ἐκ Λαοδικείας*. These words have been interpreted three different ways.

I. *Ἡ ἐπιστολὴ ἐκ Λαοδικείας* has been explained, as denoting 'an Epistle, which had been written from Laodicea to St. Paul.' This Epistle has been supposed to have contained several questions, proposed to the Apostle by the Laodiceans, which he answered in the Epistle to the Colossians; and hence it has been inferred that St. Paul ordered them to read the former, as being necessary toward a right understanding of the latter. To this opinion I subscribed in the three first editions of this Introduction: but I am now persuaded that it is false. For if St. Paul had received an Epistle from Laodicea, the capital of Phrygia, he would have returned the answer to the questions, which it contained, to Laodicea itself,

<sup>1</sup> I except however news-paper and pamphlet writers, coffee-house politicians, and stock-jobbers.

itself, and not to a small town in the neighbourhood. Besides, there would have been a manifest impropriety in sending to the Colossians answers to questions, with which they were not acquainted; and then, after they had the Epistle, which contained the answers, desiring them to read that, which contained the questions.

2. Another opinion is, that St. Paul meant an Epistle which he himself had written at Laodicea, and sent from that place to Timothy; because the Greek subscription to the first Epistle to Timothy is, *Προς Τιμοθεου εγγραφη απο Λαοδικειας*. This opinion is defended by Theophylact: but it is undoubtedly false. For it is evident from Col. ii. 1. that St. Paul had never been at Laodicea, when he wrote his Epistle to the Colossians: and if he had, he would not have distinguished an Epistle, which he had written there, by the place where it was written, but by the person or community, to which it was sent. It was not St. Paul's custom to date his Epistles: for the subscriptions, which we now find annexed to them, were all added at a later period, and by unknown persons. If therefore he had meant an Epistle, which he himself had written at Laodicea, he certainly would not have denoted it by the title of *ἡ ἐπιστολὴ ἐκ Λαοδικείας*.

3. There remains therefore no other possible interpretation of these words than an 'Epistle, which the Laodiceans had received from St. Paul,' and which the Colossians were ordered to procure from Laodicea, when they communicated to the Laodiceans their own Epistle.

But, as among the Epistles of St. Paul in our own canon, not one is addressed to the Laodiceans in particular, the question again occurs: Which, and where is this Epistle?

1. There exists an Epistle, which goes by the name of St. Paul's Epistle to the Laodiceans. But this is undoubtedly a forgery, though a very ancient one: for Theodoret, who lived in the fifth century, speaks of it in his Note to the passage in question, and says,

αὐτικά τοῖνυν καὶ προφερεσι πεπλασμενὴν ἐπιστολὴν. That the reader may judge of its authenticity, I will insert the whole of it, as printed in Fabricii Codex Apocryphus Nov. Test. Tom. I. p. 873—879. Παῦλος ἀποστόλος, ἐκ ἀπ' ἀνθρώπων, καὶ δι' ἀνθρώπων, ἀλλὰ διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, τοῖς ἐν Λαοδικείᾳ ἀδελφοῖς· χάρις ὑμῖν καὶ εἰρήνη ἀπὸ Θεοῦ πατρὸς, καὶ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ. Ευχαριστῶ τῷ Θεῷ μὲν τῷ Χριστῷ πάντοτε ἐν ταῖς προσευχαῖς μὲν, ὅτι ἐμμενοντες καὶ προσκαρτερούντες ὑμεῖς ἐστέ ἐπ' ἔργων καλῶν, προσδεχομένοι τὴν ἐπαγγελίαν ἐν ἡμέρᾳ κρίσεως. Καὶ μὴ ταραξώσιν ὑμᾶς ματαιόλογιαι τινῶν, τῶν ὑποκρινομένων τὴν ἀληθείαν, τὰ διασρεψαί ὑμᾶς ἀπὸ τῆς ἀληθείας τὰ εὐαγγέλιον τὰ εὐαγγελισθέντος ἀπ' ἐμῆ. Νυνὲν ποιήσει ὁ Θεός, ἵνα πάντες οἱ ἐξ ἐμῆ εἰσιν, εἰς τὴν τελειότητα τῆς ἀληθείας τὰ εὐαγγέλιον φερόνται, τὰ ποιῆσαι τὴν χρησότητα τῶν ἔργων, ἃ πρέπει τῇ σωτηρίᾳ τῆς ζωῆς αἰωνίης. Καὶ νυνὲν φανεροὶ ἐγίνοντο οἱ δεσμοὶ μὲν, ἐν οἷς δεσμοῖς εἰμι ἐν Χριστῷ, καὶ ἐν τετῷ χαίρω· ἀλλὰ καὶ χαρησσομαι, οἶδα γάρ, ὅτι τετὸ μοι ἀποθήσεται εἰς σωτηρίαν αἰώνιον, ὃ ἐγένετο διὰ τῆς ὑμῶν δεήσεως καὶ ἐπιχορηγίας τὰ πνεύματος ἁγίου, εἴτε διὰ ζωῆς, εἴτε διὰ θανάτου, ἐμοὶ γάρ το ζῆν Χριστός, καὶ τὸ ἀποθανεῖν χάρις. Αὐτὸς δὲ ὁ Κύριος ἡμῶν ἐν ὑμῖν ποιήσει τὸ ἔλεος αὐτοῦ μετ' ὑμῶν, ἵνα τὴν αὐτὴν ἀγαπὴν ἔχοντες συμψυχοὶ τὸ αὐτὸ φρονεῖτε. Διὰ τετὸ, ἀγαπητοὶ, καθὼς ἠκούσατέ τὴν παρακλήσιν τὰ Κυρίου, ὥτως φρονεῖτε καὶ ποιεῖτε ἐν φόβῳ τὰ Θεοῦ, καὶ ἐστέ ὑμῖν ζωὴ αἰωνίος, ὃ γὰρ Θεὸς ἐστὶν ὁ ἐνεργῶν ἐν ὑμῖν. Πάντα ποιεῖτε χωρὶς γογγυσμῶν καὶ διαλογισμῶν. Καὶ τὸ λοιπὸν, ἀγαπητοὶ, χαίρετε ἐν τῷ Κυρίῳ Ἰησοῦ Χριστῷ, καὶ ὁράτε, καὶ φυλάσσεσθε ἀπὸ πάσης αἰσχροῦ κερδὸς πλεονεξίας. Πάντα τὰ αἰτήματα ὑμῶν παραρησῖα γνωρίζεσθαι πρὸς τὸν Θεόν, καὶ βεβαίοι γίνεσθε ἐν νοῖ τὰ Χριστοῦ. Καὶ τὸ λοιπὸν, ἀδελφοί, ὅσα ἐσὶν ἀληθῆ, ὅσα σεμνὰ, ὅσα ἁγνά, ὅσα δίκαια, ὅσα προσφιλή, ταῦτα πράσσετε. Καὶ ἃ ἠκούσατε καὶ παρελάβετε, ἐν καρδίαις ὑμῶν κατεχετε, καὶ ἐστέ ὑμῖν εἰρήνη. Ἀσπασασθε τὰς ἀδελφὰς πάντας ἐν φιληματί ἁγίῳ. Ἀσπάζονται ὑμᾶς οἱ ἅγιοι πάντες. Ἡ χάρις τὰ Κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ μετὰ τὰ πνεύματος ὑμῶν. Ἀμήν. Ποιῆσατε ἵνα ἡ ἐπιστολὴ καὶ ἐν τῇ Κολοσσῶν ἐκκλησίᾳ ἀναγνωσθῇ, καὶ τὴν ἐκ Κολοσσῶν ἵνα καὶ ὑμεῖς ἀναγνῶτε. This Epistle is likewise contained in the old German Bibles printed about the year 1462; for instance, in that



that which I have described in the *Syntagma Commentationum*, Tom. I. Num. 1. and in which this Epistle is placed between the Epistles to the Galatians and Ephesians. But it is manifestly a mere rhapsody, collected from St. Paul's other Epistles, and which no critic can receive as a genuine work of the Apostle. It contains nothing, which it was necessary for the Colossians to know, nothing that is not ten times better and more fully explained in the Epistle, which St. Paul sent to the Colossians; in short nothing, which could be suitable to St. Paul's design.

2. As the Epistle therefore, which now goes by the name of St. Paul's Epistle to the Laodiceans, is a forgery, the Apostle might mean an Epistle, which he had sent to the Laodiceans, and which is now lost. An objection however to this opinion, (namely, that he had sent an Epistle to the Laodiceans in particular) may be made from Col. iv. 15. where St. Paul requests the Colossians to salute Nymphas, who was a Laodicean. If he had written a particular Epistle to the Laodiceans, he would have saluted Nymphas rather in this Epistle, than in that to the Colossians.

3. There remains a third explanation, which is not clogged with the preceding difficulty, namely that St. Paul meant an Epistle, which he had written partly, but not solely for the use of the Laodiceans. This Epistle may be that, which is called the Epistle to the Ephesians, and of which I shall treat in the following chapter.

## CHAP. XX.

## OF THE EPISTLE TO THE EPHESIANS.

## SECT. I.

*Examination of the question, whether the Epistle, which is called the Epistle to the Ephesians, was really addressed to the Ephesians.*

NOT only the superscription to this Epistle is ἡ πρὸς Εφεσίους ἐπιστολή, which indeed is of no great authority, but St. Paul's own words, ch. i. 1. are τοῖς ἁγίοις τοῖς ὄντιν ἐν Εφεσῶ. If therefore this reading be genuine, the question is at once decided. But there are several eminent critics, especially Mill, J. Peirce, Whiston, S. Crell, Wall, Benson, the younger Vitringa, Venema, and Wetstein, who prefer the reading τοῖς ὄντιν ἐν Λαοδικείῳ. Wetstein has placed it under his text as preferable to the common reading: and Bowyer, in his edition of the Greek Testament, has taken it into the text itself. That men of such learning as those, whom I have just quoted, especially Wetstein, who was not inclined to make alterations in the text of the Greek Testament, not even where it suited his own theological opinions, did not adopt this reading without strong grounds, may be easily supposed, without my asserting it. But the question is, are these grounds sufficiently strong, to prove that the reading ἐν Εφεσῶ is spurious? This question has been very fully examined by Lardner<sup>m</sup>, to whom I shall frequently have recourse, though I differ from him in several material points.

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<sup>m</sup> Supplement to the Credibility of the Gospel History, vol. II. ch. 13.

That the reading *εν Εφεσω* is spurious, is hardly credible. On the contrary, I have no doubt that it is genuine: but I will not therefore assert, that it is the only genuine reading, any more than I would assert that, because I believe the religion, in which I have been educated, leads to salvation, it is therefore the only one, which does so. That *εν Εφεσω* is genuine, we must conclude from this circumstance, that it is confirmed by the authority of all the Greek manuscripts hitherto collated, of all the ancient versions, and of the Greek Fathers, who, as Lardner has shewn, are unanimous in their opinion, that the Epistle was written to the Ephesians, and have quoted in no instance *εν Λαοδικεια* in this passage, instead of *εν Εφεσω*. Nor is any other reading quoted by the Manichæans, though they were in general disposed to make alterations in the New Testament.

The authority of the Greek Fathers is in the present instance of much greater importance, than in most other critical questions: it is in fact decisive. The testimony of Ignatius alone is sufficient: for he not only lived at the same time with St. Paul, but was particularly connected with the Ephesians, and wrote to them an Epistle: and moreover, when he wrote to them his Epistle, several members of the Ephesian church were with him, namely Burrhus, who was deacon at Ephesus, Crocus, Euphus, and Fronto<sup>n</sup>. Under these circumstances it is absolutely impossible, that Ignatius should not have known, whether the Epistle, which is called St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians, was addressed to the Ephesians, or not. But it is a certain fact, that Ignatius considered this Epistle as one addressed to the Ephesians. In the twelfth chapter of the Epistle, which he himself wrote to the Ephesians, he calls them *Παυλε συμμυσαι τῷ ἡγιασμένῳ*, and adds *ὁς ἐν πάσῃ ἐπιστολῇ, μνημονεύει ὑμῶν ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ*. The expression *ἐν πάσῃ ἐπιστολῇ* cannot be translated 'in every Epistle,' for in every

<sup>n</sup> Lardner, p. 408.

every Epistle St. Paul did not speak of the Ephesians: consequently it must be translated ‘in the whole Epistle,’ and Ignatius must mean a single or particular Epistle, which the Ephesians had received from St. Paul. The words *μνημονεύει ὑμῶν ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ*, which in themselves are somewhat obscure, receive great light from that very Epistle, which we call the Epistle to the Ephesians. Throughout the whole of the Epistle St. Paul praises the community to which he is writing, without any intermixture of censure, and speaks of the great advantages, which they as Christians enjoy in Christ Jesus: which words ‘in Christ Jesus,’ ‘through Christ’ ‘in the beloved,’ &c. occur incessantly in this Epistle, and in a manner not usual in St. Paul’s other Epistles, so that they are in some measure the distinguishing marks of this Epistle\*. The examples are so numerous, that it is unnecessary to quote them, which I rather omit for this reason, that the whole Epistle should be read, in order that their full effect may be perceived. The advocates for the opinion that this Epistle was addressed to the Laodiceans, and not to the Ephesians, have no other method of avoiding the force of this argument, (unless they declare at once that the Epistle of Ignatius is a forgery) than an alteration in the words of Ignatius, as well as in those of St. Paul, and the changing, for the sake of their hypothesis, *μνημονεύει*, which applies to St. Paul, to *μνημονεύω* in the first person, in order to make it apply to Ignatius. But this alteration was not admitted by Wettstein, who candidly confesses: ‘Ignatius in Epistola ad Ephesios non obscure significat hanc Epistolam a Paulo ad Ephesios fuisse scriptam; § 12. respicit ad i. 16. et § 1. ad v. 2.

The other expression of Ignatius, *Παυλὲ συμμυσαν*, implies that St. Paul had described the Ephesians as  
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\* This observation, which is of great consequence in explaining the words of Ignatius, escaped the notice both of Pearson in his *Vindiciæ Epistolarum Ignatii*, P. II. c. 10. and of Lardner, p. 400, 401.



his Symmystæ, or as persons initiated in the same mysteries with himself. Now in the Epistle, which we call the Epistle to the Ephesians, there is really a passage, on which this expression of Ignatius appears to be grounded. For in ch. iii. 3, 4. he uses the word *μυστηριον*, and then ver. 6. calls the persons, to whom he is writing, *συγκληρονομοι, και συσσωμοι, και συμμετοχοι*. It is true that neither the word *συμμυσης* itself, nor even *μυσης* occurs in this Epistle: yet Palladius declares that St. Paul did call the Ephesians *μυσαι*. The passage is quoted by Lardner from Palladius<sup>p</sup>, as follows. ‘ Paul called the Cretans liars, Tit. i. 12. the Galatians stupid, Gal. iii. 1. and the Corinthians proud, 1 Cor. v. 2. On the other hand, he calls the Romans faithful, the Ephesians *μυσαι*, initiated, to whom also he writes in a sublime manner, and the Thessalonians lovers of the brotherhood.’ It is therefore not impossible, that St. Paul actually used the word *συμμυσαι* in this Epistle, and perhaps where we find at present *συμμετοχοι*: but I mention this as a mere conjecture, on which I shall not insist. For Palladius might mean only, according to the sense, and not according to the terms, especially as he says in this very passage, that St. Paul called the Romans ‘ faithful,’ and the Thessalonians ‘ lovers of the brotherhood,’ though the term *πιστοι* itself does not once occur in the Epistle to the Romans, nor *φιλαδελφοι* in either of the Epistles to the Thessalonians.

Thus far in favour of the opinion, that the Epistle, called the Epistle to the Ephesians, was really addressed to the Ephesians. On the other hand, it cannot be denied, that it contains many passages, which we should hardly expect to find in an Epistle addressed to a community, where St. Paul himself had spent three years, and where Timothy at his command had appointed bishops. In the third edition of this Introduction

<sup>p</sup> In the works of Chrysostom, Vol. XIII. p. 71. E.

duction I endeavoured to give several answers to this objection: but after a more mature consideration, I am persuaded that they are not satisfactory. The objection clearly proves, that the Epistle was not addressed to the Ephesians alone: but it does not affect the opinion, that it was intended jointly for the Ephesians, Laodiceans, and several other Christian communities. The objection may be divided into the following articles:

1. St. Paul mentions in this Epistle no circumstance whatsoever peculiar to the city and Christian community of Ephesus, though in his other Epistles he very frequently alludes to the particular situation of the person or persons, to whom he is writing, as indeed every one must, who writes a letter. Yet St. Paul was thoroughly acquainted with the peculiar situation of the Christian community at Ephesus: for he had passed not less than three years there<sup>q</sup>. Nor is there any allusion in this Epistle to what St. Paul himself had suffered at Ephesus, or even to his having resided there. Further, if we compare the contents of this Epistle with St. Paul's farewell speech to the Ephesian elders<sup>r</sup>, we shall hardly suppose that it was addressed to those very persons, from whom he had thus affectionately taken leave only six years before.

2. In most of his other Epistles, he salutes the principal persons of the community, to which he writes: but in the Epistle in question, though, from his long residence at Ephesus, he must have had more intimate friends there, than in any other place, he salutes no person whatsoever. Lardner indeed contends, that this argument is of no force, because St. Paul in his Epistle to the Romans salutes more persons, than in any other of his Epistles, though he himself had never been at Rome. But this answer amounts to nothing. For though St. Paul might have many friends in a place where he had never been, yet we must not argue in an inverted order, and conclude, that in a place, where St.

<sup>q</sup> Acts xx. 31.

<sup>r</sup> Acts xx. 18—36.

St. Paul had spent three years, he had no friend whatsoever, whom he thought worthy of a salutation.

3. When St. Paul sent this Epistle, Timothy was with him: for the Epistle to the Colossians, which was sent at the same time<sup>s</sup>, was written in the joint names of St. Paul and Timothy<sup>t</sup>. But Timothy was most intimately connected with the Christian community at Ephesus, and had both selected and appointed their elders and ministers. Yet St. Paul has neither annexed the name of Timothy to his own, though he did so in the Epistle to the Colossians, which was written at the same time, nor even sent a salutation from him.

4. St. Paul says, ch. i. 15, 16. ‘Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints, cease not to give thanks for you.’ The expression, ‘after I *heard* of your faith,’ is not very consistent with the supposition that St. Paul was writing to the members of a church, which he himself had founded. If, in order to invalidate this argument, the words of St. Paul, *αὐξῶντας τὴν καθ’ ὑμῶν πίστιν* be rendered otherwise, and be made to signify ‘when, or as often as, I hear mention made of your faith,’ still it will be difficult to find an answer to the following argument.

5. St. Paul says, ch. iii. 1, 2. ‘For this cause, I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, if ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God, which is given me to you-ward.’ In this manner he would surely not have written to persons, whom he himself had instructed in the doctrines of Christianity, and among whom he had resided three years: for of such persons he could not possibly have expressed a doubt whether they had heard of the dispensation given

<sup>s</sup> Tychicus was the bearer of both, as appears from Ephes. vi. 21, 22. Col. iv. 7, 8.: to say nothing of their great similarity in expressions, as well as in thoughts.

<sup>t</sup> Col. i. 1.

given him, that is, of his divine apostleship, or not. And if we suppose, that in the interval, which elapsed between St. Paul's departure from Ephesus, and the time of his writing this Epistle, the Ephesian church had been augmented by the accession of several thousand members, it is improbable, that even among these new members there was any one, who had not been informed that St. Paul was an Apostle. This argument therefore appears to me to be decisive.

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## S E C T. II.

*Whether this Epistle was an Epistle to the Laodiceans.*

THE advocates for the opinion that the genuine reading in Ephes. i. 1. is not τοῖς ὅσιν ἐν ἐφεσῷ, but τοῖς ὅσιν ἐν λαοδικείᾳ, have no other authority than that of Marcion. It is true that Marcion was an heretic, and one who made very many alterations in the New Testament, in order to render it more suitable to his own system: but, as I have already observed, not all the deviations in Marcion's copy of the Greek Testament are to be considered as corruptions, and in the present instance it is difficult to conceive what benefit could accrue to Marcion's theological opinions from an alteration of ἐν ἐφεσῷ to ἐν λαοδικείᾳ. The very early age therefore in which Marcion lived, the place of his birth, his travels, and his learning, render him in the present case, which has no concern with either orthodoxy or heterodoxy, a very important witness. He lived in the former part of the second century, was a native of Sinope, a city celebrated for its



its valuable libraries<sup>w</sup>, took a journey in the earlier part of his life to Rome, and on this journey travelled perhaps through Laodicea or Ephesus. But even if he never visited either of these places, and saw only in his native country, Pontus, copies of the Epistle in question with *ἐν Λαοδικείᾳ*, this reading acquires a very strong support. It is to be lamented that we have not Marcion's own words, from which we might have learnt on what authorities, or on what manuscripts, he grounded this reading. Our knowledge on this subject is derived merely from the two following passages in Tertullian's fifth book against Marcion. The one is c. xi. *Prætereo hic et de alia epistola, quam nos ad Ephesios perscriptam habemus, hæretici vero ad Laodiceanos*<sup>x</sup>: the other is c. xvii. *Ecclesiæ quidem veritate Epistolam istam ad Ephesios habemus emissam, non ad Laodiceanos. Sed Marcion et titulum aliquando interpolare gestiit, quasi et in illo diligentissimus explorator. Nihil autem de titulo interest, cum ad omnes Apostolus scripserit, dum ad singulos*<sup>y</sup>. In these two passages Tertullian, as usual, appears merely as an advocate against heretics, and not as a cool critic, or impartial inquirer into truth; for he accuses him at once of interpolation and corruption, without examining the ground of his opinion, which is so far from meriting reprobation without inquiry, that it has been adopted in later ages by several writers of the most eminent abilities. And this neglect of Tertullian is attended with great inconvenience in the present inquiry, be-  
cause

<sup>w</sup> Moses Chorenensis relates in his *History of Armenia*, p. 101, that Africanus a writer of the third century, derived the greatest part of his materials relative to what concerned Armenia from manuscripts in the library of Edessa, whither the treasures had been brought, which were contained in the libraries and archives at Nisibis and Sinope,

<sup>x</sup> Tertullian is here speaking of Ephes. ii. 12,

<sup>y</sup> Here he is speaking of several passages: ch. i. 10, 12, 'ii. 1, 2, 3. 10, 11. 13, 14, 15, 16, 17. 19, 20. iv. 11, 12.

cause Epiphanius, in his forty-second Herefy<sup>z</sup>, speaks of Marcion, as if he had an Epistle to the Laodiceans different from that to the Ephesians. My sentiments on what Epiphanius says on this subject I shall deliver in the following section, where I shall endeavour to shew that Marcion's opinion agreed with the hypothesis, which I shall there attempt to support. In the mean time if the reader chuses to examine what other writers have said, he may consult Hody<sup>a</sup> and Lardner<sup>b</sup>. I must observe however at present, that the contradiction is only apparent; and that if Marcion's authority does not give sufficient support to the reading *εν Λαοδικεία*, Ephes. i. 1. it must be ascribed merely to the imperfection of our accounts,

If it was the real opinion of Marcion, that the Epistle, which is called the Epistle to the Ephesians, was addressed to the Laodiceans, he deduced it from the circumstances and contents of the Epistle itself. That St. Paul must have written to the Laodiceans about the same time that he wrote to the Colossians, I have already observed in the third section of the preceding chapter. And the Epistle, which is now the subject of inquiry, has all the appearance of being that very Epistle, which St. Paul desired the Colossians to procure from Laodicea: for it affords the best explanation of the Epistle to the Colossians, the two Epistles in fact illustrating and completing each other.

On the other hand, if the Epistle, which is called the Epistle to the Ephesians, was in fact an Epistle to the Laodiceans, it may be objected, that St. Paul would hardly have desired the Colossians to greet in his name the Laodiceans<sup>c</sup>, to whom he wrote, according to this hypothesis,

<sup>z</sup> Pag. 309, 310. 318, 319.

<sup>a</sup> De textibus originalibus, p. 664.

<sup>b</sup> Supplement, Vol. II. p. 462—468.

<sup>c</sup> Col. iv. 15. Nymphas also appears to have been a member of the Laodicean community. Why then did St. Paul salute Nymphas in the Epistle to the Colossians, rather than in the Epistle to the Laodiceans?

hypothesis, at the same time. Mill indeed supposes, that St. Paul's design in greeting the Laodiceans in his Epistle to the Colossians, was to make amends for having concluded the Epistle to the Laodiceans, not with the words 'Grace be with you,' but with 'Grace be with all them, that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity<sup>d</sup>.' But, as this was equivalent to 'Grace be with you,' at least in respect to all worthy members of the community, and might in fact be considered as a mark of esteem, and as implying, that the persons, to whom St. Paul was writing, really did love Christ in sincerity, there was nothing in this conclusion, which required any reparation. Besides, the contents of the whole Epistle are such, that the persons, who received it, could entertain no doubt of their being respected and loved by St. Paul. And at the beginning of it, as was usual in the Greek Epistles, St. Paul had already given a formal salutation.

The arguments, which Wetstein has produced to prove, that the Epistle in question was written, not to the Ephesians, but to the Laodiceans, are very unsatisfactory. One of them is really a *petitio principii*. He says, 'Si Ephesiis scripta est, cur a Laodicensibus erat petenda?' but this is taking for granted the thing to be proved, namely, that the Epistle, of which St. Paul speaks, Col. iv. 16. was that, which we call the Epistle to the Ephesians. Another argument used by Wetstein is grounded on the supposed similarity of this Epistle, and of that to the Colossians, to the Epistle addressed to the angel of the church of Laodicea in the Apocalypse. Now if this similarity were real, which it certainly is not<sup>e</sup>, still Wetstein's inference would be without

\* Ephes. vi. 24.

<sup>e</sup> I will quote two of Wetstein's examples, and leave the reader to judge of the similarity. Apoc. iii. 18. 'Anoint thine eyes with eye-salve, that thou mayest see,' he compares with Ephes. i. 18. 'the eyes of your understanding being enlightened.' But the former passage contains a severe reproof, which cannot be said of the latter.

In

out foundation: for the similarity would consist, not in the situation and circumstances of the churches, from which alone we could argue, but merely in the thoughts and expressions. But we cannot suppose of an Epistle written by St. Paul to the Laodiceans, and of the Epistle to the Laodiceans in the Apocalypse, that the one was an imitation of the other. And if we attend to the contents of these Epistles, we shall find reason to draw an inference directly opposite to that, which was drawn by Wettstein. For no two Epistles can in this respect be more dissimilar: the one being replete with praise, the other with censure. Since therefore the Epistle, which is called the Epistle to the Ephesians, was addressed to persons, who enjoyed the esteem of St. Paul, and the Epistle to the Laodiceans in the Apocalypse was addressed to persons, who were objects of severe reproof, we may rather conclude that they were not written to the same church: unless the inference be evaded by the supposition that the conduct of the Laodiceans at one time merited commendation, at another time reproach, a supposition, which is not warranted by either of the Epistles.

In another example he compares Apoc. iii. 20. 'Behold, I stand at the door, and knock,' with Col. iv. 3. 'that God would open to us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ.' Here there is no other similarity than in the word 'door:' and an hundred other instances from various parts of the Bible might be produced with equal ease, by only having recourse to a concordance.



## SECT. III.

*The Epistle, called the Epistle to the Ephesians, was probably confined to no Christian community in particular: but was a circular Epistle intended for the use of the Ephesians, Laodiceans, and some other churches of Asia Minor.*

FROM the preceding doubts and contradictions we may be relieved by an hypothesis, at present very generally received, but hitherto not supported by sufficient arguments, that the Epistle in question was addressed exclusively, neither to the Ephesians, nor to the Laodiceans; but that it was a circular Epistle intended for their joint use, and the use of some other churches in Asia Minor, which Tychicus the bearer of this Epistle visited on his journey, being commissioned by St. Paul to inquire into the situation of these several Christian communities<sup>f</sup>.

According to this hypothesis then, St. Paul had several copies taken of this Epistle for the several communities, to which he intended it should be sent, and subscribed with his own hand the words, ἡ χάρις μετὰ πάντων τῶν ἀγαπῶντων τὸν Κύριον ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν ἐν ἀφθαρσίᾳ, ch. vi. 24. at the end of each copy. At the beginning of the Epistle after the words τοῖς ἁγίοις τοῖς ἔσιν, he added the name of the church to which the copy was to be sent, so that in the copy intended for the Ephesians he wrote τοῖς ἁγίοις τοῖς ἔσιν ἐν Ἐφεσῶ, in the copy intended for the Laodiceans, τοῖς ἁγίοις τοῖς ἔσιν ἐν Λαοδικείᾳ, and in like manner in the other copies. Marcion therefore might have seen either in Pontus, or at Laodicea, a copy with the inscription ἐν Λαοδικείᾳ. If this hypothesis be adopted, all

<sup>f</sup> Col. iv. 8. Ὅν ἐπεμψα πρὸς ὑμᾶς εἰς αὐτὸ τῆτο, ἵνα γνῶτε τὰ περὶ ὑμῶν, καὶ παρακαλεσθῆτε τὰς καρδίας ὑμῶν. Ephes. vi. 22. Ὅν ἐπεμψα πρὸς ὑμᾶς εἰς αὐτὸ τῆτο, ἵνα γνῶτε τὰ περὶ ὑμῶν, καὶ παρακαλεσθῆτε τὰς καρδίας ὑμῶν. In both these passages St. Paul certainly meant to say the same thing: and therefore in the latter, I would read γνῶ or γνῶ τε in two words, for γνῶτε, and περὶ ὑμῶν for περὶ ὑμῶν.

all the arguments advanced in the first section of this chapter against the opinion, that the Epistle was written to the Ephesians, as well as those in the second section against the opinion, that it was written to the Laodiceans, fall at once to the ground. For a circular Epistle intended for the use of several churches must contain nothing peculiar to any one of them: it must contain no salutation to any individual either of this or of that community, because the Epistle was general: nor could the name of Timothy have been annexed with propriety to that of St. Paul at the beginning of the Epistle, because Timothy, though intimately connected with the Ephesian church, was not so with the other churches, for which the Epistle was designed. To the Colossians St. Paul did not send a copy of this Epistle, because he wrote to them separately: but he desired them to send for it from Laodicea.

If it be asked, from what cause the name of Ephesus (*εν Εφεσω*) became general in all the manuscripts of the Greek Testament, and all the ancient versions, to the exclusion of Laodicea, and other names, which the Apostle might have written in the respective copies, I answer, that when the several parts of the Greek Testament were collected into a volume, the copy inserted in this collection must have been procured from Ephesus: of which the necessary consequence was, that in the subsequent transcripts of the Greek Testament, which were made from this collection, the reading *εν Εφεσω* became the invariable reading, though *εν Λαοδικείῃ* was still to be found in several single copies of this Epistle, which existed in the second century.

It is probable that this hypothesis agrees also with what Marcion thought on this subject. Tertullian, who was always more the advocate, than the critic, has not sufficiently explained Marcion's sentiments: but there is a passage in Epiphanius, which, though rather obscure, will enable us to form at least some judgement of this matter. In his 42d Heresy, p. 309. of the Cologne edition printed in 1682, he says Marcion  
admitted

admitted only ten Epistles of St. Paul, in which he omitted some things and altered others<sup>g</sup>: and in the following page he enumerates these ten Epistles in the order in which they were placed by Marcion, namely, 1. the Epistle to the Galatians; 2. the first to the Corinthians; 3. the second to the Corinthians; 4. the Ep. to the Romans; 5. the first to the Theſſalonians: 6. the second to the Theſſalonians; 7. the Ep. to the Ephesians<sup>h</sup>; 8. to the Coloſſians; 9. to Philemon; 10. to the Philip-  
pians. Epiphanius then immediately adds, ‘ Marcion has also ſeveral fragments of an Epistle, which bears the name of an Epistle to the Laodiceans<sup>i</sup>.’ Here the question occurs: had Marcion really two different Epistles, one called an Epistle to the Ephesians, the other to the Laodiceans: or were they one and the ſame Epistle, with different titles, which Epiphanius, miſtaking Marcion’s meaning, repreſented as different Epistles? Now Epiphanius, p. 319. under the following title, *Προς Φιλημονα Θ, παρ’ ἡμῖν δε ιγ’ η και ιδ’, προς Φιλιππησις ι, παρ’ ἡμῖν δε ς, προς Λαοδικεις ια*, quotes theſe words: *Εἰς κυριος, μια τωσις, ἐν βαπτισμα, εἰς Θεος και πατηρ παντων, ἐπι παντων και δια παντων, και ἐν πασιν*. Theſe words are not in the ſpurious Epistle to the Laodiceans, but they are literally in our Epistle to the Ephesians. Yet Epiphanius quotes them under the article of the *Επισολη προς Λαοδικεις*, which he calls *ια*, or the eleventh Epistle, according to the arrangement in Marcion’s *Apoſtolicon*: and moreover p. 318. diſtinguiſhes from it the Epistle to the Ephesians, which he calls the ſeventh in Marcion’s *Apoſtolicon*, and quotes the following paſſages, Ephes. ii. 11. 12. v. 14. 31. as they were worded in his *Apoſtolicon*. This conſuſion and contradiction I am unable to remove in any other manner than by ſuppoſing,  
that

<sup>g</sup> Εχει δε και επιſολας τε ἁγιᾶ αποſολᾶ δεκα, αἱς μοναις κεχρηται, ἐ πασι δε τοις ἐν αυταις γεγραμμενοις, αλλα τινα αυτων περιτεμνων, τινα δε αλλοιωſας κεφαλαια.

<sup>h</sup> Marcion therefore did not reject that Epistle, which is called the Epistle to the Ephesians, as one might conclude from the words of Tertullian above-quoted, unless we had this paſſage of Epiphanius.

<sup>i</sup> Εχει δε και της προς Λαοδικεις λεγομενης μερη.



that Marcion had not two different Epistles, the one to the Ephesians, the other to the Laodiceans, but only one, namely, that which is known at present by the former name: that in the age in which Marcion lived, some copies of this Epistle were inscribed ‘Epistle to the Ephesians,’ and others ‘Epistle to the Laodiceans:’ that Marcion sometimes quoted it under one title, sometimes under the other, which led Epiphanius into error, and induced him to refer to two supposed different Epistles what Marcion had quoted from only one. Of this the example just quoted is a remarkable proof: since a passage which is really in our Epistle to the Ephesians, ch. iv. 5. 6. is produced by Epiphanius, as being in the Epistle called by Marcion the Epistle to the Laodiceans.

If the preceding statement be admitted, the difficulties, in which this subject is involved, will be removed. If it be rejected, the accounts of Tertullian and Epiphanius will cease to favour the opinion, that St. Paul ever wrote an Epistle, which was designed for the use of the Laodiceans: in which case we shall be destitute of all historical evidence in support of this opinion. And, since it appears from the first section of this chapter, that the Epistle in question could not well have been written for the exclusive use of the Ephesians, it follows that, unless it were written for the use of other communities, its authenticity will be doubtful.

#### S E C T. IV.

##### *Continuation of this Subject.*

**I**N the preceding section I have represented this subject, as to me it appears consistent with the truth. But since many eminent writers, who agree with me in the opinion itself, that this Epistle was a circular Epistle intended



intended for the joint use of the Ephesians, Laodiceans, and other Christian communities, yet differ in their mode of stating it, I ought not to pass over their sentiments in silence.

Some suppose that in the place where we now read, τοῖς ἁγίοις τοῖς ἔσιν ἐν Ἐφεσῷ, St. Paul wrote τοῖς ἁγίοις τοῖς ἔσιν . . . . , with a blank space after ἔσιν, which was to be filled up in each copy by the name of the respective communities, as soon as the copies arrived at their place of destination. Now, though it is much more probable that St. Paul himself inserted each name, before he sent off the copies, yet there is a passage in the works of Basil the Great, which appears at first sight to favour the opinion of a vacancy, and which the advocates for this opinion have accordingly quoted. The passage is <sup>k</sup>: Ἀλλὰ καὶ τοῖς Ἐφεσίοις ἐπισέλλων, ὡς γνησίως ἠνωμένοι τῷ Οὐτὶ δι' ἐπιγνώσεως, Οὐτὰς αὐτοὺς ἰδιαζόντως ὠνομασεν, εἰπὼν, τοῖς ἁγίοις τοῖς Οὐσι, καὶ πιστοῖς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησῷ. 'Οὕτω γὰρ οἱ πρὸ ἡμῶν παραδεδωκάσι, καὶ ἡμεῖς ἐν τοῖς παλαιοῖς τῶν ἀντιγραφῶν εὗρηκαμεν. ' And writing (namely St. Paul) to the Ephesians, as truly united through knowledge to him *who is*, he called them in a peculiar sense those *who are*, saying: *To the saints who are, and the faithful in Christ Jesus.* For thus our ancestors have delivered it to us, and thus have we found it in ancient copies.'

Now before we attempt to judge of this passage, we must recollect that the Greeks used the word *Ὦν* in a very emphatical sense, which we cannot easily express by any single word in modern languages. For instance in examining the question, whether a substance, which is constantly changing its particles of matter, still remains the same individual substance, they called that, which constituted its identity, *τὸ Ὀν*. The Deity, who is unchangeable, is called therefore by Platonic philosophers, especially by Philo, *ὁ Ὦν*; and in the Septuagint also this title is applied to the Deity, Exod. iii. 14. Now this very passage of the Septuagint is applied by Basil, to confute

<sup>k</sup> Basilii Magni. Op. Tom. I. p. 743. or Tom. I. p. 254. ed. Garnier.

confute an error of Eunomius, and to prove that the Son of God existed from all eternity. On this occasion he quotes several passages, where *Εἰς*, in his opinion, is used of the true God in this emphatic sense, in opposition to the false Gods, who are called *μη οντες*. Soon after he says that the heathens, who did not acknowledge the true God, were called *τα μη οντα*, Esther xiv. 11. and 1 Cor. i. 28.: but that the Christians, who worshipped the true God, were called *οἱ οντες*. Finding therefore in the Epistle to the Ephesians, ch. i. 1. the expression *τοῖς ὑσιν*, he takes it in the same emphatical sense, and argues from it against the Eunomians, whom he refuses to call *οἱ οντες* as being heretics. We, who are accustomed to a more rational mode of interpreting scripture, must consider Basil's mode of reasoning on the words *τοῖς ὑσιν* as very absurd. But it is of no consequence to the present inquiry, whether he argued rationally or not. The only question is, whether he did argue thus, which I think no one can doubt, who reads all his arguments in connexion. But if this be true, and the whole turns on the supposed emphatic sense of *τοῖς ὑσιν*, the inference, which Usher, Bengel, and several other eminent critics have drawn from this passage, is without foundation.

They argue, namely, thus. In our present text of the Epistle to the Ephesians we find, ch. i. 1. *τοῖς ἁγίοις τοῖς ὑσιν ἐν Ἐφεσῶ, καὶ πῖσις ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ*: but the words which Basil quotes from this place, as appears from the passage just alleged, are, *τοῖς ἁγίοις τοῖς ὑσιν, καὶ πῖσις ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ*, without *ἐν Ἐφεσῶ*. Hence it is inferred that in the Greek manuscript, from which Basil quoted, *ἐν Ἐφεσῶ* was omitted. But Basil, at the very beginning of the passage, calls the Epistle, from which he quotes, an Epistle to the Ephesians, and therefore we must suppose that *ἐν Ἐφεσῶ* was not wanting in his copy. In answer to this reply it is again said, that Basil, in support of the reading which he quotes, appeals to ancient manuscripts, which he himself had seen, saying: *οὕτω — καὶ ἡμεῖς ἐν τοῖς παλαιοῖς τῶν ἀντιγραφῶν εὗρηκαμεν.*

εὐρηκαμεν. He must have meant therefore, as is inferred, to distinguish those manuscripts which had not *εν Εφεσω*, from those which had it, and to give the former the preference. But this inference is without foundation: for Basil not only says that this reading was in ancient manuscripts, but says at the same time, *ὁὕτω οἱ πρὸ ἡμῶν παραδεδωκασι*: consequently he makes the common reading and the reading of these ancient manuscripts the same. That Basil therefore omitted *εν Εφεσω* by design, and by authority, I do not believe. On the contrary, as his whole attention was directed to the word *εσιν*, and his whole argument is built upon it, I would rather conclude, that Basil's appeal to Greek manuscripts had reference only to *εσι*, which to him was of so much importance. For, it is not improbable, that, in the same manner as we find in Col. i. 2. *τοῖς εν Κολοσσαις ἁγίοις*, without *εσιν*, some few copies also of the Epistle to the Ephesians, in the time of Basil, omitted the significant word, and had only *τοῖς ἁγίοις εν Εφεσω*.

Dr. Koppe<sup>1</sup>, if I understand him rightly, proposes to omit, both *εν Εφεσω*, and *τοῖς εσιν*, and to read Ephes. i. 1. thus, *τοῖς ἁγίοις καὶ πῖστοις εν Χριστῳ Ἰησῃ*. In support of this argument, he appeals to the words of Tertullian quoted in the second section of this chapter: 'ecclesiæ veritate epistolam istam ad Ephesios habemus emissam:' whence he concludes that, according to Tertullian, this Epistle was considered as having been sent to the Ephesians, merely on the authority, that is, as Dr. Koppe explains it, on the tradition of the church. But whoever is conversant with the writings of Tertullian, must admit, that it was the usual custom of this Latin father to represent the church as the only depositary of faithful manuscripts: nor does the expression 'ecclesiæ veritas' necessarily denote merely oral tradition. Further, he appeals to another expression of Tertullian in the same passage, 'Marcion et titulum aliquando interpolare gestiit:' and thinking only on the superscription, *πρὸς Εφεσιους ἐπιστολὴ Παυλῆ*, he infers that in ch. i. 1. no

mention

<sup>1</sup> Nov. Test. cum perpetua annotatione, p. 287. 288.



mention was made of Ephesus. But cannot the authentic superscription of an Epistle, for instance, Cicero S. D. Pompeio, or Trajanus Plinio, with equal reason have the name of ‘titulus?’ Besides, the authority of Tertullian, in whatever manner the passage be explained, cannot be opposed to the united evidence of all the Greek manuscripts and all the ancient versions. If we were warranted to draw any inference, the only one would be this, that there were Latin copies in Africa, where Tertullian lived, in which the name of Ephesus was omitted: for as Tertullian was a Latin father, we cannot argue from what he says to Greek manuscripts. But even this inference would be very precarious, because all the Latin manuscripts, of which we have any knowledge, read ‘qui sunt Ephesi,’ in Ephes. i. 1.

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## S E C T. V.

*Of the situation of the Christian community at Ephesus: and the contents and style of the circular Epistle, which they received from St. Paul.*

**T**HE situation of the Christian community at Ephesus I have already described in the fourteenth chapter<sup>m</sup>, which relates to St. Paul’s first Epistle to Timothy: to which place therefore I refer the reader, as containing all that is necessary on this subject<sup>n</sup>, since the Epistle was not written solely to the Ephesians, but sent to them jointly with other Christian communities. On this account it contains nothing, which can distinguish it as an Epistle addressed to the inhabitants of Ephesus, as the two

<sup>m</sup> Sect. 2. 3. 4.

<sup>n</sup> Whoever wishes for more information, on the city and church of Ephesus, may consult the Introduction to this Epistle by Salomon van Til, and G. Gude De ecclesiæ Ephesinæ statu.



two Epistles to the Corinthians for instance distinguish themselves from all other of St. Paul's Epistles by their allusions to local circumstances. Lardner indeed supposes\*, that St. Paul has in several instances made use of the architectural style, because the Ephesians valued themselves on the beautiful structure of the temple of Diana, and as examples he quotes, ch. ii. 19—22. iii. 18. But this conjecture is too artificial, and it appears to me to be without foundation: nor indeed is it to be expected, that St. Paul, even in an Epistle intended solely for the Ephesians, should use the technical terms of architecture, any more than I should expect, that an Epistle on theological subjects addressed to persons, who lived in a fortified town, should contain allusions to ravelins and bastions.

Some commentators have supposed that this Epistle was addressed only to heathen converts. But this is hardly credible, because the Christians both at Ephesus, and in other cities of Asia Minor, for which it was designed, consisted not only of heathen, but likewise of Jewish converts. Neither the commencement nor the close of the Epistle warrants the conclusion: for both are expressed in general terms, so as to include converts of every description, especially the latter, which is, ch. vi. 24. 'Grace be with all them, that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.' The advocates for this opinion allege that St. Paul very frequently uses the second person plural 'Ye;' by which, they say, he understands only heathen converts in opposition to himself who was a Jewish convert. But it must be observed that St. Paul uses also in this Epistle the first person plural, 'We,' and in these cases we must conclude on the same ground that he meant to include the Jewish converts. In ch. i. 3—12. he constantly uses 'We;' and ver. 13. he adds 'Ye also.' In like manner, ch. ii. 1. 2. he addresses the heathen converts in the second person plural, as having been formerly idolaters: and ver. 3. he changes the person, saying, 'we also had our conversation in times

times past in the lust of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh, and of the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.' I admit however, that this Epistle is addressed principally to heathen converts, whom St. Paul means, where he speaks in the second person, reminding them of their former situation, and of the happiness, which they had attained by their conversion from heathenism to Christianity. We must conclude therefore, that from the accounts, which St. Paul had received concerning the situation of the Christian communities, to which he sent this Epistle, he did not think it so necessary to give particular instructions for the converts from Judaism.

In the three first chapters, St. Paul's principal object is to shew, that Jews and Gentiles partake of equal privileges and blessings in the kingdom of Christ, and that they are united in one church, or, as he expresses it, 'an holy Temple in the Lord.' He describes Jesus Christ as being 'the chief corner stone:' and ch. iii. 18. he again alludes to this temple, speaking of its length, breadth, height, and depth. Now if I understand St. Paul rightly, he means that the temple, of which Christ was the head corner stone, comprehended the length and breadth of the whole earth, that in its height it extended to heaven, and in its depth to the regions of the dead<sup>p</sup>. This doctrine was very proper for mixed communities consisting partly of Jewish and partly of Gentile converts: and, if we attend to the distinction, which St. Paul makes in this Epistle between 'we' and 'ye,' we shall more easily perceive its application. From this doctrine he makes a transition in the fourth chapter to the unity of the church: which, he says, must not be disturbed by the difference, which subsisted between the spiritual gifts, and by a superiority, which they who had a greater share, claimed over the rest. St. Paul assures them, that these spiritual gifts, various as they were, were given for one common purpose, and that the

<sup>p</sup> I shall say more on this passage in the Exposition of the Epistle to the Ephesians.

the members of every Christian community, however different their talents, were members of the same body. This affords him an opportunity of explaining the nature and design of spiritual gifts, from which it appears, that such as were supernatural were not intended to last for ever, but only during the infancy of the church, or as long as it was in danger of being overturned by 'every word of doctrine, and the sleight of men.' But on this subject I shall say more in the Exposition of this Epistle.

Another object, which St. Paul had in view, was to shew that the advantages, which both the Jewish and Gentile converts received from the Christian religion, were to be attributed to Christ alone, and not to the intervention of any other superior Beings, by whatever names they are called, whether Archangels according to our language, or *Æons* according to the language of the Gnostics. In the communities therefore, to which this Epistle was addressed, the Gnostic and Essene notions of intermediate spirits must have prevailed: for St. Paul not only alludes, in this Epistle, much more than in the Epistle to the Colossians, to the doctrines of the Gnostics, but uses even the technical terms of their philosophy, especially in ch. ii. 2. vi. 1. and this use of Gnostic terms is so remarkable, that I once heard a man celebrated for his learning and abilities, express a doubt on this very account, whether St. Paul was the author of this Epistle. But St. Paul adopted the Gnostic terms, in order to combat their doctrines, which, as appears from the contents of this Epistle, must have been introduced in the Christian communities, to which he sent it. That this is true of the Ephesian church we see from 1 Tim. vi. 20. 21.: and many other cities of Asia Minor were probably infected with the same notions.

Whoever reads with attention Ephes. ii. 1—12, which is the first passage of this Epistle, where St. Paul makes use of Gnostic expressions, must observe, that the subject relates to heathenism and idolatry, to which the greatest part of those, to whom the Apostle wrote, were formerly addicted: and even the other passage,



ch. vi. 11, 12. appears to me to relate, not so much to the immediate temptation of the devil, as to the temptation to idolatry, which is the service of the devil. This leads me to the conjecture, that idolatry, which had been banished by Christianity, had again attempted to insinuate itself under the mask of the Gnosis, which was itself nothing more than a system of heathenism and polytheism.

The moral part of this Epistle, which begins with ch. iv. 17. is, as well as the preceding part, very similar to the Epistle to the Colossians, and in many places almost exactly agrees with it. But as we know not for how many different communities this Epistle was designed, and therefore with the exception of the Ephesians, are unable to judge of the particular situation of those persons who received it, we cannot easily assign the motive, which influenced St. Paul in the choice of those moral doctrines, which he delivered in it. But though the motive is unknown to us, he certainly selected these moral doctrines with some particular view. Throughout the whole Epistle we find no mention made of particular faults or reigning vices, and for this very reason, that it was a circular Epistle, and not designed for any one church exclusively. Hence this Epistle contains fewer censures, than the generality of St. Paul's Epistles. But we must not therefore conclude, that all the communities, to which St. Paul sent it, were so exemplary in their conduct, as not to merit censure: since we see that the circumstance of its being a circular Epistle prevented St. Paul from entering into a detail of the faults peculiar to any one community. And that they had their faults we may conclude from the caution, which he has given them, ch. v. 5. 6. 'This ye know that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ, and of God. Let no man deceive you with vain words.' By the expression 'vain words' (*κενοῖς λόγοις*) St. Paul probably meant the empty and false doctrines of some of the heathen philosophers, especially among the Greeks, and likewise of some of the Gnostics, who maintained,



maintained, that the indulgence of sensuality was not a crime. In ch. v. 22—35. he gives directions for the conduct of married persons, and represents matrimony as a holy state, by comparing the union of man and wife with the union of Christ and his church. Perhaps in this comparison, he intended to combat indirectly the doctrine of the Essenes, who asserted that matrimony was an unholy state, and unworthy of a wise man.

With respect to the style of this Epistle, it must be observed that there is a peculiarity in it, which makes this Epistle in some measure more difficult to be understood, than any other of St. Paul's Epistles. Each single word is perfectly intelligible : but the sentences are so long, and the members, of which each sentence consists, are at the same time so short, that they are frequently capable of many different constructions, of which we cannot easily determine which is the right one. If a passage therefore of this Epistle were taken unpointed, some would place the commas in one place, some in another : and, what increases the difficulty is, that in our common editions of the Greek Testament, the points are placed with much less judgement in this Epistle, than in any other part<sup>a</sup>. The Epistle to the Colossians also contains in some places long periods, with short clauses, but not in an equal degree with the Epistle to the Ephesians. The cause of this peculiarity in the Epistle to the Ephesians, to which every commentator ought especially to attend, I will not attempt to assign<sup>b</sup>. We cannot ascribe it to the circumstance of St. Paul's advanced age : for the second Epistle to Timothy, which was written still later, has as fluent language as any other of St. Paul's Epistles.

<sup>a</sup> See Vol. II. Ch. xiii. Sect. 4. of this Introduction.

<sup>b</sup> There is one passage however, in which I will hazard a conjecture. In ch. vi. 11. 13—16. St. Paul has a very long metaphor taken from the several parts of offensive and defensive armour, in some of which I have doubts in regard to the application. But the question here to be asked is : Was this long continued metaphor occasioned by St. Paul's situation, when he wrote this Epistle, he being then in custody at Rome, and watched by soldiers of the imperial life-guard ? Compare Acts xxviii. 16. with Phil. I. 13.

## C H A P. XXI.

## OF THE EPISTLE TO THE PHILIPPIANS.

## S E C T. I.

*Of the city Philippi, and the state of the Christian community there.*

**S**T. PAUL had established a Christian community at Philippi, on the journey through Macedonia, which St. Luke has described, Acts xvi. 12—40. and of which I have given an account, Ch. xi. Sect. 1. Philippi was a city of Macedonia, of moderate extent, and not far from the borders of Thrace. It was formerly called Crenides, from its numerous springs, from which arises a small stream, mentioned Acts xvi. 13. though it is commonly omitted in the maps. The name of Philippi it received from Philip, father of Alexander, who enlarged it, and fortified it as a barrier town against the Thracians. Julius Cæsar sent hither a Roman colony, as appears from the following inscription on a medal of this city, COL. IUL. AUG. PHIL. quoted in Vaillant Num. æn. imp. T. I. p. 160, and from Spon Misc. p. 173. See also Pliny, L. IV. c. 11. and the authors in Wolfii Curæ, in the note to Acts xvi. 12. St. Luke calls Philippi, *πρωτη της μεριδος της Μακεδονιας πολις*, ‘the first city of that district of Macedonia:’ but in what sense the word *πρωτη*, or ‘first,’ is here to be taken admits of some doubt. Paulus Æmilius had divided Macedonia into four districts, and that, in which Philippi was situate, was called *πρωτη*, or the first district. But of this district Philippi does not appear to be entitled in any sense to the name of *πρωτη πολις*. For if *πρωτη* be taken in the sense of ‘first in respect to place,’ this title belonged rather to Neapolis, which was the frontier town

town of Macedonia toward Thrace, as appears from Acts xvii. 1. And, if it be taken in the sense of 'first in respect to rank,' it belonged rather to Amphipolis, which was the capital of this district of Macedonia, as appears from the following passage in Livii Hist. Lib. XLV. 29. *Capita regionum, ubi concilia fierent, primæ regionis Amphipolin, secundæ Theſſalonicen, &c.* But the difficulty is not so great as it appears to be. For, though Amphipolis was made the capital of the first district of Macedonia in the time of Paulus Æmilius, and therefore entitled to the name of *πρωτη*, it is not impossible that in a subsequent age the preference was given to Philippi. Or even if Amphipolis still continued to be the capital of the district, or the seat of the Roman provincial government, yet the title *πρωτη* may have been claimed by the city Philippi, though it were not the very first in point of rank. We meet with many instances of this kind, on the medals of the Greek cities, on which we find that more than one city of the same province assumed the title of *πρωτη*°. St. Luke therefore, who spent a long time at Philippi, and was well acquainted with

° In Boze's dissertation on a coin of the city of Smyrna, printed in the 17th volume of the *Memoires de l'Academie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres*, are quoted several examples, though they are not applied there to the present question. For instance, on the medals struck at Nicæa in Bithynia, this city was called ΠΡΩΤΗ ΤΗΣ ΕΠΑΡΧΙΑΣ, (see p. 3. of this dissertation): yet the title *πρωτη* was likewise assumed by Nicomedia, on a coin of which city we find ΝΙΚΟΜΗΔΕΙΑ Η ΜΗΤΡΟΠΟΛΙΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΡΩΤΗ ΒΙΘΥΝΙΑΣ. Another coin of Nicomedia struck in the time of Trajan has ΝΙΚΟΜΗΔΕΙΑ Η ΜΗΤΡΟΠΟΛΙΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΡΩΤΗ ΠΟΝΤΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΒΙΘΥΝΙΑΣ. (p. 4) Now since the conciseness of inscriptions on medals does not usually permit an unnecessary repetition of the same thing in different words, we must conclude that *πρωτη* was not synonymous to *μητροπολις*. In the Proconsular Asia, Ephesus was properly the capital: yet both Smyrna and Pergamus assumed the title *πρωτη*. Boze (p. 5. 6.) mentions not only an Ephesian coin with the inscription ΕΦΕΣΙΩΝ ΠΡΩΤΩΝ ΑΣΙΑΣ, but a coin of Pergamus with ΠΕΡΤΑΜΗΝΩΝ ΠΡΩΤΩΝ, though without ΑΣΙΑΣ, and two coins of Smyrna, the one inscribed ΣΜΥΡΝΑΙΩΝ ΠΡΩΤΩΝ ΑΣΙΑΣ, the other ΠΡΩΤΗ ΑΣ ΑΣ ΚΑΛΛΕΙ ΚΑΙ ΜΕΤΕΘΕΙ. In consequence of these pretensions of Smyrna and Pergamus, the Ephesians inscribed their coins ΕΦΕΣΙΩΝ ΜΟΝΩΝ ΠΡΩΤΩΝ ΑΣΙΑΣ.

with the customs of the place, gave this city the title which it claimed, and which, according to the custom of the Greek cities, was inscribed probably on its coins. Hence it appears that the proposal made by Pierce to alter *πρωτη της μεριδος* to *πρωτης μεριδος* is unnecessary.

From the contents of this Epistle we learn that the most dangerous seducers, against whom it was necessary to warn the Philippians, were the Pharisaical Jews, or zealots for the law of Moses. Further, we perceive that the Christian community at Philippi sent to St. Paul a regular stipend, or an annual stated present, ch. i. 5. iv. 15—17. This annual present had been sent to the Apostle by the hands of Epaphroditus, as deputy from the Philippians; who at the same time assisted him in propagating the Gospel in Italy, St. Paul himself being prisoner in Rome, which assistance brought on Epaphroditus a very severe and dangerous illness, ch. ii. 25—30. Daubuz, in his first book *De testimonio Christi apud Josephum*, P. III. §. 8. represents this Epaphroditus as a person of great distinction, supposing him to be the Epaphroditus, who was a freed-man of Nero, and who encouraged Josephus to write his *Jewish Antiquities*. But since many persons within the compass of the Roman Empire might have borne the name of Epaphroditus, the identity, though possible, cannot be said to be probable. And if we take into the account, that Josephus wrote his *Jewish Antiquities* at the request of Nero's freed-man, the supposition becomes even improbable: for, if the freed-man of Nero was the same, as the Epaphroditus who was deputed by the Philippians, he was a zealous Christian, and consequently he would not have patronised the works of Josephus. The Jewish seducers, who were undoubtedly of the new Pharisaic sect founded by Judas Galilæus, are described by St. Paul, ch. iii. 2. 18. 19. in very strong terms, as men of reprobate character: and they appear to have been exactly of the same stamp, as the seducers of the Galatians, of whom I have given an account, Ch. xi. Sect. 2.

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As the Philippians had thrice<sup>†</sup> sent to St. Paul their annual present, previous to that, which they sent by the hands of Epaphroditus, it is probable that he had not received these presents in silence, but that he had made some written acknowledgement. One might conclude therefore that he had already written to them several Epistles: a conclusion, which is corroborated by what the Apostle himself says, ch. iii. 1. 18. especially in the latter place, where he writes thus to the Philippians, ‘For many walk, of whom *I have told you often*, and now tell you even weeping, that they are enemies of the cross of Christ.’

In the exordium of this Epistle, we find, contrary to St. Paul’s general practice, bishops and deacons mentioned in the general salutation: *πᾶσι τοῖς ἁγίοις τοῖς ὄντιν ἐν Φιλιπποῖς συν ἐπισκοποῖς καὶ διακονοῖς*, ch. i. 1. The most probable reason for this deviation is that assigned by Theophylact, namely, that they were the persons, who had sent Epaphroditus, to bring the contributions of the Philippian community<sup>‡</sup>. St. Paul therefore greeted them in particular in this Epistle, which he did not in his Epistles to other churches, because the Philippians alone contributed to his necessities, as he himself says in his Epistle to them. But he first mentions the members of the community at large, and then the bishops and deacons, as ministers of the church. That there were several bishops at Philippi will not appear extraordinary to any one, who reflects on the state of the Christian communities in the time of the Apostles. In that age the Christians had no public edifices or temples, which contained, as in later ages, an assembly of several thousands, but were obliged to hold their meetings in private

<sup>†</sup> See Phil. IV. 16.

<sup>‡</sup> The words of Theophylact are: *Τίνος δὲ χάριν τῷ κληρῷ νῦν γράφει, ὅπερ ὑδάμιν ἀλλάχῃ ἐποίησεν; Ὅτι αὐτοὶ τὸν Ἐπαφροδίτον ἐπεμψάν ἐπαγομενον τὰ πρὸς χρεῖαν τῷ ἀποστόλῳ.* It may at the same time be observed that this very address to the bishops and deacons in the exordium to the Epistle to the Philippians, and its being a deviation from the address in all St. Paul’s other Epistles, is sufficient to confute the opinion maintained by Dr. Semler that St. Paul’s Epistles were all designed for the exclusive use of the clergy.

private houses. Where the Christians were numerous, these meetings, and consequently the inspectors, or bishops, who presided in them, were multiplied in proportion: for no room in a private house could hold a very numerous congregation. This order of things continued, till by degrees the jurisdiction of Christian bishops extended itself to whole cities, to whole dioceses, and at length to whole principalities.

In ch. iv. 2. St. Paul speaks of Evodia and Syntyche, as two very excellent women, but who unfortunately were at variance: and the difference, which subsisted between them, appears to have occasioned likewise a division in the whole community. If we judge from their names, they were not Jewish, but Greek women, who before their conversion to Christianity, had adopted perhaps the Jewish religion, and therefore, according to the language of the Acts of the Apostles were *γυναίκες σεβομεναι*, like Lydia, mentioned Acts xvi. 14. As persons of rank and fortune, they must have had material influence on the other members of the community, whom St. Paul describes, 2 Cor. viii. 2. as being in general poor. Whether they had an office in the church, or not, no one at present can determine. It is indeed not impossible, that they were deaconesses, and made their houses places of assembly: but no one can assert it, since we have no knowledge on this subject. Both Evodia and Syntyche appear to have been in the wrong: St. Paul therefore advises them to be reconciled to each other, and requests a friend, whose name he has not mentioned, to take upon him the office of mediator<sup>w</sup>.

<sup>w</sup> Ερωτω και σε, συζυγε γησις, συλλαμβανη αυταις, αιτινες εν τω ευαγγελιω συνηθλησαν μοι, μετα και Κλημεντος και των λοιπων συνεργων μου, ων τα ονοματα εν βιβλω ζωης. Ch. iv. 3. Beside the mediator therefore, whose name St. Paul has not mentioned, it might be thought that Clement was also requested to co-operate in effecting a reconciliation. But instead of construing μετα και Κλημεντος with Ερωτω και σε, I would rather construe it with συνηθλησαν μοι, and suppose that St. Paul meant to say, 'that Evodia and Syntyche had combated for the Gospel, together with Clement (by whom I understand Clement of Rome) and

## SECT. II.

*St. Paul wrote the Epistle to the Philippians, during his first imprisonment in Rome, at a time, when he expected to be soon released.*

**T**HAT St. Paul was prisoner in Rome, when he wrote the Epistle to the Philippians, appears from ch. i. 13. where he says that his bonds were known to the whole prætorian guard : and ch. iv. 22. he sends a salutation from ‘ Cæsar’s household.’ Mr. Oeder, in a Programma published in 1731, has indeed attempted to shew, that this Epistle was written at a much earlier period, and not long after the conversion of the Philippians to Christianity : but his arguments have been so completely answered by Wolf in his *Prolegomena* to this Epistle, that it is unnecessary to say any thing further on this subject. I must make however one observation on what Oeder says of *κοινωνία εἰς τὸ εὐαγγέλιον*, ch. i. 5. which he explains of the contribution of the Philippians toward the propagation of the Gospel. Now I grant, that the Philippians sent to St. Paul an annual present, to assist him in propagating the Gospel : but I do not admit that this passage warrants the conclusion, that St. Paul wrote the Epistle to the Philippians, soon after he received the first contribution ; for he adds ‘ from the first day until now,’ from which we see that these contributions had been repeated several times. In fact, from these annual contributions we may conclude that some years had elapsed between the conversion of the Philippians and the writing of this Epistle. St. Paul himself

and the Apostle’s other fellow-labourers, whose names are in the book of life.’ If this be true we must conclude that Evodia and Syntyche had been with St. Paul in Rome : whither he had sent for them perhaps, in order to bear testimony to his conduct in Macedonia, where he had been accused of preaching sedition, Acts xvi. 20. xvii. 6. 7. — What I have said in this note, I give only as conjecture, and not as fact.



himself acknowledges, ch. iv. 16. that he had twice received this annual present, beside that which the Philippians had sent to him at Theſſalonica, and what I grant was ſoon after their converſion. When he returned to Philippi on his journey through Macedonia mentioned Acts xx. 1. he undoubtedly returned them thanks in perſon for the preſents, which he had already received: and the imprifonment of St. Paul in Cæſarea and Rome, which happened ſhortly after, muſt have prevented the ſending of their annual bounty during ſome years, to which St. Paul alludes, ch. iv. 10, 11. If it be objected, that between the converſion of the Philippians and the year 60<sup>x</sup>, more than four payments muſt have been made, I anſwer that in thoſe times there was not that regular and eaſy communication between diſtant countries, which there is at preſent, in conſequence of the eſta bliſhment of poſts, and the circulation of mercantile drafts: and therefore the Philippians had it not in their power to remit their annual contribution at a ſtated period, but were obliged to wait, till they met with a convenient opportunity.

It is evident that the Epistle to the Philippians was not written at the ſame time with thoſe to the Ephesians and Coloffians: and I think it equally clear that it was written later than thoſe Epistles. St. Luke accompanied St. Paul to Rome, and ſtaid with him there at leaſt two years. Now St. Paul wrote his Epistles to the Ephesians and the Coloffians while St. Luke was with him, as appears from Col. iv. 14. Philem. 24. But St. Luke had certainly left him, before he wrote his Epistle to the Philippians: for ſince St. Luke ſpent many years at Philippi<sup>y</sup>, and was therefore well known to the Chriſtian community there, St. Paul would not have omitted to ſend a ſalutation from him to the Philippians, if he had been ſtill in Rome. Beſides, as St. Paul wrote the Epistle to the Philippians, not only in his own name  
but

<sup>x</sup> See above, Ch. viii. Sect. 4.

<sup>y</sup> He ſtaid at Philippi during the time of St. Paul's travels, related Acts xvi. 1—xx. 5. 6. See the laſt paragraph of Ch. vi. Sect. 3.



but likewise in that of Timothy, beginning thus, ch. i. 1. Paul and Timothy servants of Jesus Christ, &c.: I think, that if St. Luke had likewise been present, his name also would have been added in the exordium, to which he had certainly as good a claim, if not a better, than Timothy. But, what is still more decisive, St. Paul says, ii. 19, 20. ‘I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy shortly unto you, that I also may be of good comfort, when I know your state. For I have no man like-minded, who will naturally care for your state.’ Surely St. Paul could not have written thus, if his fellow-labourer St. Luke had been with him.

The situation of St. Paul, as a prisoner, was likewise different, when he wrote his Epistle to the Philippians, from that, in which he wrote to the Ephesians, and Colossians. It is true, that even when he wrote to the Ephesians and Colossians, his confinement was not severe, nor his prospects gloomy: but when he wrote to the Philippians, his situation was greatly improved, and his expectations much more favourable. He says, ch. i. 12—14. ‘My bonds in Christ are manifest in all the palace, and in all other places: and many of the brethren in the Lord, waxing confident by my bonds, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.’ And ch. iv. 22. he says, ‘All the saints salute you, chiefly they that are of Cæsar’s household:’ whence it appears that the Christian religion had been introduced into the imperial palace. That he expected, and was even confident, that he should be soon released, is evident from what he says, ch. i. 25. 26. ‘Having this confidence I know (ταυτο πεποιθως οίδα) that I shall abide and continue with you all, for your furtherance and joy of faith: that your rejoicing may be more abundant in Jesus Christ for me, by my coming to you again.’ And he is so confident of his release, that he says, ch. ii. 24. ‘I trust in the Lord, that I also myself shall come shortly.’

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\* He adds likewise ver. 15. that some Jewish-minded persons preached Christ also of envy and strife.

The two last-quoted passages afford a strong argument in favour of the opinion, that St. Paul was twice prisoner in Rome, and consequently, that the Epistle to the Philippians was written during the first imprisonment. The strong expression *προποθεως οίδα*, ch. i. 24. especially as St. Paul had immediately before deliberated, whether it were better for him to live or to die, appears to imply, that he spake in the spirit of prophecy, and with an actual assurance of being released. Whoever therefore believes that St. Paul was inspired, must conclude that his expectations were fulfilled, that he was actually released, that his martyrdom therefore did not take place at the end of this imprisonment, and consequently that he underwent a second. On the other hand, they who assert that St. Paul spake in this passage merely from the suggestions of human wisdom, may contend that, though he had every reason to expect, when he wrote to the Philippians, that he should soon be released, his prospects might have suddenly changed; for before the close of the year, in which this Epistle was written, namely, in the year 65, the Christians really underwent a severe persecution from Nero, who charged them with having set fire to Rome, in order to remove the suspicion of his having been himself the perpetrator.

That the Epistle to the Philippians was written at the beginning of the year 65, appears from various circumstances. It could not have been written before the year 65, because it was written after the period, with which St. Luke closes the Acts of the Apostles. Nor could it have been written after the year 65, or even so late as the end of that year, because in that year the conflagration of Rome happened, which was followed by a severe persecution of the Christians<sup>a</sup>: and an Epistle written after that persecution would certainly have represented both the prospects of St. Paul himself, and the state of Christianity at Rome, in a different manner from that, which we find in the Epistle to the Philippians. Nor would Jewish impostors have ventured after that persecution

<sup>a</sup> Taciti Annal. Lib. XV. c. 44.

cution to preach the Christian religion, though they preached it in a manner, which provoked St. Paul <sup>b</sup>.

The more immediate occasion of this Epistle was the return of Epaphroditus, by whom St. Paul sent it, as a grateful acknowledgement of the money, which he had received. At the same time he gave them an account of his confinement in Rome, and warned them against the seductions of the Jews.

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## C H A P. XXII.

## OF THE SECOND EPISTLE TO TIMOTHY.

## S E C T. I.

*Of the place, where Timothy was, when St. Paul wrote to him his second Epistle.*

**I**T is generally supposed that Timothy was at Ephesus, when St. Paul wrote to him the second Epistle, as he was, when St. Paul wrote to him the first: but as this admits of some doubt, it will be necessary to examine it more closely. That Timothy was at least somewhere in Asia Minor, when St. Paul wrote to him the second Epistle, appears to be probable from ch. iv. 13. where Timothy is requested to bring with him some things, which St. Paul had left in Troas. But that Timothy passed through Troas in his way to St. Paul is not a necessary consequence, since he might have sent to Troas for the things, which St. Paul requested him to bring. Still less can we infer from this passage, that Timothy was then in Ephesus: and the only probable inference, which we can deduce, is, that Timothy was somewhere in Asia Minor.

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<sup>b</sup> Ch. i. 15—18.



The advocates for the opinion, that Timothy was then in Ephesus, allege, that St. Paul speaks in this Epistle of several persons, who resided in Ephesus, and relates to Timothy in what manner he had been treated by them, on their meeting in Rome : whence it is inferred, that Timothy was then in Ephesus. But this inference is very precarious. For, as Timothy was particularly acquainted with the Ephesian community, and had even appointed bishops there, he would have been interested in the conduct of the Ephesians, even if he had not been then resident among them : and St. Paul therefore, even in this case, might have thought proper to inform Timothy that all the Christians of Asia Minor had deserted him<sup>c</sup>, and that Alexander the copper-smith was one of his principal adversaries.

Further, appeal is made to the following passages.

1. St. Paul salutes, ch. iv. 19. the house of Onesiphorus ; and from ch. i. 16—18. is inferred that Onesiphorus was an inhabitant of Ephesus.

Now it is true, that St. Paul in the last-quoted passage, after having mentioned the favours, which he had received from Onesiphorus, when he was in Rome, adds, ‘ and in how many things he ministered unto me at Ephesus thou knowest very well.’ But this is no proof that Onesiphorus was an inhabitant of Ephesus : for, in the same manner, as he was a stranger in Rome, when he ministered to St. Paul there, he might have been likewise a stranger at Ephesus, when he shewed to St. Paul a similar kindness.

2. Lardner alleges, that St. Paul in the very same verse, in which he salutes the house of Onesiphorus, salutes also Aquilas and Priscilla, who resided some time at Ephesus, as appears from Acts xviii. 18, 19. 26.

Now that they had resided some time at Ephesus, I grant : but it does not therefore follow, that they were there, when St. Paul wrote his second Epistle to Timothy. That they had left Ephesus, and were re-

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turned to Rome, before St. Paul wrote his Epistle to the Romans, is evident from Rom. xvi. 3.: and whether they went, when they again left Rome, is a matter wholly uncertain. As Aquilas was a native of Pontus<sup>d</sup>, he may as well be supposed to have gone to some city in that country, as to any other part of Asia Minor. Besides, as Aquilas was by profession an instrument-maker, as I shall shew in the following chapter, it is probable that he frequently changed the place of his abode, in order to promote the sale of his wares.

3. St. Paul advises Timothy to be on his guard against Alexander the copper-smith, ch. iv. 15. who is supposed to be the same as the Alexander mentioned Acts xix. 33. who was an Ephesian, and at the instigation of the Jews, acted the part of an orator, in stirring up the people against St. Paul. Now I admit that the Alexander, against whom St. Paul warns Timothy, and who had lately taken an active part against St. Paul, was the same as the Alexander, who had formerly opposed St. Paul at Ephesus: but I do not therefore admit, that Timothy was necessarily at Ephesus, when St. Paul wrote to him. For, even if Timothy had been in some other town of Asia Minor, the Apostle might have thought it necessary to guard him against so dangerous and active an adversary, who did not confine his persecution to one place, but after having accused St. Paul at Ephesus, had followed him some years afterwards as far as Rome.

However, though no one of the preceding arguments, taken by itself, is sufficient to prove, that Timothy was at Ephesus, when St. Paul wrote to him his second Epistle, yet their united force will render the opinion not improbable, till positive arguments can be brought on the other side of the question. Now there are really two arguments against the opinion that Timothy was at Ephesus.

1. St. Paul says, ch. iv. 12. ‘Tychicus have I sent to Ephesus.’ Hence we may argue, that Timothy was not

<sup>d</sup> Acts xviii. 2.

not at Ephesus; for, if he had been there, he would have known of the arrival of Tychicus, without being informed of it by St. Paul.

Lardner has endeavoured to answer this objection: but he did not perceive its full force. For he attempts only to shew, what no one will deny, that, if Timothy was at Ephesus, it was the same thing, whether St. Paul said, I have sent Tychicus to thee, or I have sent Tychicus to Ephesus.

2. St. Paul says, ch. iv. 20. ‘Trophimus have I left at Miletus sick.’ Now, if Timothy had been at Ephesus, he must have known this circumstance, without having been informed by St. Paul, as Miletus was not far distant: especially since Trophimus was an Ephesian, as we see from Acts xxi. 29.

The arguments therefore on each side of the question appear to me to counterpoise each other in such a manner, as to leave the question undecided. In fact, it is not improbable, that St. Paul himself did not exactly know in what city of Asia Minor Timothy would receive the Epistle, which he was writing to him: for, as Timothy was very active in propagating the Gospel, we may conclude that he frequently removed from one town to another. And as Asia Minor was not only at some distance from Italy, but separated from it by two seas, the communication between St. Paul and Timothy cannot be supposed to have been so regular, that the former always knew where the latter resided. Though St. Paul knew not exactly, where Timothy was, he might have written to him an Epistle, and have entrusted it to a safe person, who was travelling into Asia Minor, with an order to deliver it to him, wherever he found him.

## S E C T. II.

*Whether this Epistle was written, while St. Paul was prisoner for the first time in Rome, or during a second imprisonment there.*

**T**HAT St. Paul was a prisoner, when he wrote this Epistle, is evident from ch. i. 8. 12. 16. ii. 9. and that his imprisonment was in Rome appears from ch. i. 17. But the question to be asked is, whether he wrote it during the imprisonment recorded by St. Luke in the last chapter of the Acts: or whether he wrote it during a second imprisonment there. This question will likewise involve another, namely, whether the old tradition, that St. Paul was twice prisoner in Rome, be really true.

It is obvious from the contents of this Epistle, that at the time, when St. Paul wrote it, his situation was very different from that, in which he wrote the Epistles to the Ephesians, Colossians, Philemon, and the Philippians. For these Epistles discover very advantageous prospects, and shew that the Apostle expected to be soon released: whereas the second Epistle to Timothy plainly indicates, that he had then no other expectation, than that of an approaching death. When he wrote the Epistle to the Philippians, his cause had taken so favourable a turn, that many, even interested Jews, had been induced to preach the Gospel. But, when he wrote his second Epistle to Timothy, his situation was such, that every one of those, who were formerly his friends, had deserted him, excepting St. Luke\*. Further, St. Luke was not with him, when he wrote the Epistle to the Philippians: and again, the persons, from whom he sends salutations in the  
second

\* Ch. iv. 11.

second Epistle to Timothy, ch. iv. 21. are not mentioned in any of St. Paul's former Epistles, and appear therefore to have been persons, with whom Timothy, who was in Rome, when St. Paul wrote his Epistles to the Colossians and Philippians, had then made an acquaintance. Hence it is evident, that the second Epistle to Timothy was written under different circumstances, and at a different time from the above-mentioned Epistles. It must likewise appear highly probable, merely from this statement, that it was written later. But from this statement alone, we must not immediately conclude, that it was written during a second imprisonment: for it still remains possible, that St. Paul was only once prisoner in Rome, and that the favourable expectations, and the hopes of a release, which he had in the former part of it, were changed before he wrote the second Epistle to Timothy, especially in the year 65, when the Christians underwent a severe persecution from Nero. But, if this be true, and St. Paul remained prisoner in Rome from the time of his first arrival there to the time of his martyrdom, it must at least be admitted, that the Apostle wrote the second Epistle to Timothy toward the close of this imprisonment, and shortly before his death.

Lardner<sup>f</sup>, on the supposition that St. Paul was twice prisoner in Rome, has taken great pains to prove, that the second Epistle to Timothy was written during St. Paul's first imprisonment there. But though Lardner's arguments on this subject are very numerous, they are totally ineffective. However, as he has collected almost every thing, which can be said on this side of the question, the reader will do well to consult him. The other side of the question, namely, that this Epistle was written during a second imprisonment in Rome, is very ably, and very impartially supported by Mosheim

<sup>f</sup> Supplement to the Credibility of the Gospel History, Vol. II. p. 226—274.



Mosheim in his Exposition of the two Epistles to Timothy<sup>g</sup>.

The main question, for the sake of greater perspicuity, may be divided into the four following parts.

1. Was this Epistle written during St. Paul's first imprisonment in Rome?
2. Or during a second imprisonment there?
3. If St. Paul was only once prisoner in Rome, was it written in the former part of this imprisonment?
4. Or toward the close of it?

Before I proceed to the examination of these questions, I must observe, what Mosheim indeed has already noticed, that the first question in some measure involves an absurdity. For the opinion that St. Paul was twice prisoner in Rome is supported by no historical evidence<sup>h</sup>, and the second Epistle to Timothy alone can furnish a proof, that he was actually released the first time, that he left Rome, that he afterwards returned thither, and was again imprisoned. It is true, that an exception may be made for the argument, which I deduced in the second section of the preceding chapter, from Phil. i. 25. (where St. Paul confidently speaks of an approaching release) in favour of the opinion, that he was actually released, on the supposition, that the confident expectations of an inspired man could not be disappointed. But, as theologians both in ancient and in modern times have doubted, whether St. Paul was endued with a prophetic spirit, in matters relating to his own life and fortune, it may be disputed, whether his expectations were fulfilled. Instead therefore of inquiring, whether the second Epistle to Timothy was written during St. Paul's first imprisonment in Rome, we should ask whether it was written in the former part of his imprisonment there. Now that this is highly improbable appears from what has been already said in this section.

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<sup>g</sup> Pag. 609—622.

<sup>h</sup> See Ch. xvii. Sect. 2.

What I have to advance on this subject, I shall deliver in the ten following arguments, the six first of which are not decisive; but the four last, I think, shew beyond a doubt, that St. Paul was really a prisoner in Rome at two different times, and that this Epistle was written during the second imprisonment.

1. When St. Paul wrote to the Colossians, and still later, when he wrote to the Philippians, Timothy was with him, as appears from Col. i. 1. Phil. i. 1. But Timothy was absent, and in Asia Minor, when he received his second Epistle from St. Paul.

Now this argument shews, that these Epistles were written at different periods: but it does not determine which of them was written first. As far as we can judge from the Acts of the Apostles, Timothy did not accompany St. Paul on his voyage from Cæsarea to Italy, nor even on his journey to Jerusalem, where St. Paul was first apprehended: for the name of Timothy does not once occur from the twenty-first chapter of the Acts to the end of the book. St. Paul therefore might have written the second Epistle to Timothy immediately after his arrival in Rome, and have requested him to come thither before the winter<sup>1</sup>: consequently, Timothy came to Rome after the receipt of St. Paul's second Epistle to him. On the other hand, St. Paul says in his Epistle to the Philippians, ch. ii. 19. he hopes soon to send Timothy to them: whence it follows, that Timothy was absent from Rome, soon after St. Paul wrote to the Philippians. Now if we assume only one imprisonment of St. Paul in Rome, it is not impossible, that after Timothy's departure, the Apostle requested him to come again to Rome; but if St. Paul was prisoner there at two different times, we have no ground for the supposition, that Timothy, who was with St. Paul in the middle of the first imprisonment, was again with him at the beginning of the second.

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<sup>1</sup> Ch. iv. 9. 21.

2. When St. Paul wrote the Epistle to the Colossians, St. Mark was with him, as appears from Coloss. iv. 10. Philem. 23.: but St. Mark was absent from St. Paul, when he wrote the second Epistle to Timothy, as we see from ch. iv. 11. where he requests Timothy to bring St. Mark with him.

This argument is again indecisive, and may be applied on the other side of the question. St. Mark may very possibly have been absent from Rome in the first year of St. Paul's imprisonment, have come thither before the winter, and consequently have been with St. Paul, when the Apostle wrote to the Colossians. On the other hand, it is equally possible that St. Mark was with St. Paul, at the commencement of the imprisonment: but it must not therefore be inferred, that he was there likewise at the beginning of the second imprisonment, and consequently St. Paul, during the second imprisonment, may, by means of Timothy, have requested St. Mark to come again to Rome, where he had before been so serviceable to the Apostle.

3. St. Luke, who accompanied St. Paul from Cæſarea to Rome, and remained probably two years there, was with St. Paul, when he wrote the second Epistle to Timothy, as well as, when he wrote the Epistle to the Colossians, as appears from 2 Tim. iv. 11. Col. iv. 14.: but St. Luke was not with him when he wrote the Epistle to the Philippians, as I have already shewn, Ch. xxi. Sect. 2.

This argument may be likewise applied on both sides of the question. St. Luke, who was his usual companion, may have been with him at Rome in a second, as well as in the first imprisonment. And, during the two years imprisonment mentioned Acts xxviii. 30, 31. St. Paul's situation was far from being so dangerous, as it is represented in the second Epistle to Timothy.

4. When St. Paul wrote to the Colossians and to Philemon, Demas was with him, as we find in Col. iv. 14. Philem. 24.: but when he wrote the second  
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Epistle to Timothy, Demas had left him, and was gone to Thessalonica. This circumstance makes it probable, that the second Epistle to Timothy was written later, than that to the Colossians: but it is not decisive, because it is possible, that Demas, though he deserted St. Paul, might repent and afterwards return to him. The argument however is at least a presumptive one.

5. It appears from Ephes. vi. 21, 22. and Col. iv. 7, 8. that St. Paul, when he had written these Epistles, sent Tychicus with them to Ephesus, Colossæ, and other places in Asia Minor: and at this very time, Timothy was with St. Paul in Rome. Again, St. Paul in his second Epistle to Timothy, ch. iv. 22. tells him, that he has sent Tychicus to Ephesus. Tychicus therefore was sent by St. Paul from Rome to Ephesus at two different times: and if we consider the distance between the places, and the time requisite for executing his commission, it is not unreasonable to suppose, that a year elapsed between his first departure from Rome, and his return thither. Hence we may infer, that there was an interval of a year between the writing of the Epistle to the Colossians, and of the second Epistle to Timothy: but whether the former or the latter was first written, still remains a question. Several commentators have applied this argument in so confused a manner, that it is difficult to determine what inference they intend to draw from it: but Mosheim, whom I have followed, has set it in a clearer light.

6. It appears from 2 Tim. iv. 6, 7, 8. that when St. Paul wrote the second Epistle to Timothy, his prospects were so unfavourable, that he expected soon to suffer martyrdom: but he had the strongest expectations of being soon released, when he wrote the Epistle to the Philippians, as we see from Phil. i. 25.

This argument Mosheim<sup>k</sup> considered as decisive in favour of the opinion, that St. Paul was released after he wrote his Epistle to the Philippians, and that he  
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<sup>k</sup> Pag. 615. of his Exposition of the Epistles to Timothy.



wrote his second Epistle to Timothy during a second imprisonment, only a short time before his death. But, as this argument rests on the supposition, that St. Paul had, from inspiration, such a knowledge of future events, as to be incapable of a mistake in what he confidently expected, which not every critic of the present age will admit; and, as questions of historical fact ought properly to be determined by historical arguments, or such as men of all descriptions must admit, I do not reckon the present argument among the decisive ones. Besides, the expectation of martyrdom, which St. Paul expresses, 2 Tim. iv. 6—8. are not couched in such strong terms, as his expectation of release, Phil. i. 25. where he says *προσδοκῶ ὁδοῦ*: and they appear to have been built on no other foundation than the appearance of things, which were liable to change. Further, an Apostle may be inspired by the Deity when he is writing on matters of doctrine and faith: and yet that very Apostle may remain as ignorant, as other men, in regard to the good or ill fortune, which awaits himself. And, as it would be detrimental to men in general to know with certainty their future destiny, we may suppose, that St. Paul himself could judge of his own fate only from present probabilities. In his Epistle to the Romans, ch. 24, 28. 30—33. he speaks of plans and designs, which he intended to put in execution: but as we do not know that they ever were, we must not consider these declarations as prophecies.

On the six preceding arguments therefore I shall lay no particular stress: but the four following are decisive, and clearly shew, that the second Epistle to Timothy was written, not only later than those to the Colossians and Philippians, but during a second imprisonment of St. Paul in Rome.

7. Whether the expectations of St. Paul, that he should soon suffer martyrdom were fulfilled, or not, it is certain, that his situation, when he wrote the second Epistle to Timothy, was extremely dangerous. This appears,

appears, not only from the above-quoted passage, ch. iv. 6, 7, 8. but likewise from ver. 16. where St. Paul says, that at his first answer all men forsook him. This is quite the reverse of his situation when he wrote to the Philippians: for at that time the gentle treatment of St. Paul had emboldened many to preach the Gospel, and had induced even several Jews to teach Christianity, in the hopes of gain<sup>1</sup>. Further, St. Paul says, 2 Tim. iv. 17. that though every man deserted him on his first hearing, the Lord stood by him, and he was ‘delivered from the mouth of the lion.’ This strong expression indicates, that St. Paul had been in very great danger. Again, the Apostle says in the following verse, he hopes the Lord will deliver him from every evil work, that is, as he himself explains it, not in a temporal sense, but ‘unto his heavenly kingdom.’

These circumstances shew, not only that the second Epistle to Timothy was written at a different time from the Epistles to the Colossians, to Philemon, and the Philippians, in which he expresses his hopes of being soon released, and even desires Philemon to prepare for him a lodging, but determine likewise the question, which the preceding arguments left unsettled, whether it was written sooner or later, and clearly decide in favour of the latter opinion. During the two years, when St. Paul was first prisoner in Rome, his confinement and treatment were extremely mild, as St. Luke relates, Acts xxviii. 16—31. saying, that St. Paul lived in his own lodging, guarded only by a single soldier, and received visits unmolested. This indulgence would not have been granted him, had he been at that time persecuted in such a manner, as to warrant the strong expression of a deliverance from the mouth of the lion, and an expectation of suffering death.

This seventh argument therefore clearly shews, that the second Epistle to Timothy was written at a later period than the two years imprisonment mentioned by St. Luke, during which were written the Epistles to the Colossians,

<sup>1</sup> Phil. i. 14—17.

Colossians, to Philemon, and the Philippians. But this seventh argument alone does not decide the question, whether St. Paul was actually released at the end of the two years, and therefore wrote this Epistle in a second imprisonment in Rome, or whether he was not released, and therefore wrote it, in the same imprisonment continued. As we have no historical data on this subject, it still remains possible therefore, that the latter is true, and that at the close of the second year, St. Paul's situation was altered materially for the worse in consequence of the persecution, which the Christians underwent in the year 65, after the conflagration of Rome. But the following arguments shew, that St. Paul was actually released, and that the second Epistle to Timothy was written during a second imprisonment in Rome.

8. It appears from 2 Tim. iv. 13. 20. that, when St. Paul wrote the second Epistle to Timothy, he had lately been in Troas, Miletus, and Corinth. He had therefore taken at that time a very different route to Rome, from that, which St. Luke has described in the two last chapters of the Acts.

In 2 Tim. iv. 13. he desires Timothy to bring with him a trunk, and especially some books, which he had left behind at Troas. But St. Paul, on his voyage from Cæsarea to Italy, described in the two last chapters of the Acts, did not come near Troas, for he sailed only along the southern coast of Asia Minor. It is true, that he visited Troas on his way to Jerusalem, previous to his imprisonment, and his subsequent voyage to Italy, as we find from Acts xx. 4, 5, 6, 7. But as this visit to Troas happened in the year 60, and the second Epistle to Timothy could not have been written before the year 65, I cannot suppose that St. Paul then left behind at Troas what he desired to Timothy to bring, because he would hardly have deferred the sending for these things so long as five years. In this case, he would rather have sent for them to Cæsarea, where he continued not less than two years in prison: or, if he

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had desired Timothy to bring them to Rome, he would have made the request on his first arrival there.

9. When St. Paul wrote his second Epistle to Timothy, he had lately left Trophimus sick at Miletus, as appears likewise from ch. iv. 20. But this could not have happened on the journey to Jerusalem, because Trophimus was with St. Paul in Jerusalem, Acts xxi. 29. And on his voyage from Cæsarea to Italy, St. Paul did not touch at Miletus: consequently, he could not at that time have left him sick there, even if Trophimus had accompanied St. Paul on this voyage, of which however we have no knowledge. Lardner indeed asserts<sup>m</sup>, that Trophimus might have accompanied St. Paul on his voyage, though St. Luke has not mentioned it: and that, as the ship, in which St. Paul sailed, passed along the coast of Asia Minor, he might then have set Trophimus on shore at Miletus. But, if we attend to St. Luke's narrative, we shall find this to be utterly impossible. For St. Luke says, ch. xxvii. 8. 'When we had sailed slowly many days, and scarce were come over against Cnidus, the wind not suffering us, we sailed under Crete, over against Salmone.' The wind therefore was north, and Cnidus was the most northerly place, which they could reach: consequently, they could not have reached Miletus, which lay two-thirds of a degree still more to the north. Beza and Grotius have endeavoured to remove this objection, which is a strong argument against their hypothesis, by proposing to read *εν Μελιτη*, 2 Tim. iv. 20. instead of *εν Μιλητω*: and Lardner likewise has no objection to this alteration. But as it is supported by no Greek manuscript, and no ancient version, and is adopted with no other view, than to strengthen a previously assumed opinion, it is certainly not admissible.

Other commentators have endeavoured to free themselves from this difficulty by saying, that St. Paul's assertion,

<sup>m</sup> Supplement to the Credibility of the Gospel History, Vol. II. p. 237—239



assertion, ‘I have left Trophimus sick at Miletus,’ means only, ‘I have put Trophimus sick on shore, that he might go to Miletus.’ But this is a forced and unnatural explanation: for if St. Paul had set Trophimus on shore at any other place than Miletus, he would have mentioned that place, and not the place, where, according to this explanation, he really did not leave him. Besides, if Trophimus was sick, it would have been as fatiguing to have travelled to Miletus from the place, where he landed, as to have remained in the ship: and, if he was able to travel, he would have gone not to Miletus, but to Ephesus, for Trophimus was an Ephesian. This therefore is a mere evasion, which has no other object, than to prove at any rate, let the difficulties be what they will, that the second Epistle to Timothy was written during St. Paul’s first imprisonment in Rome.

10. St. Paul says, ch. iv. 20. that Erastus staid behind in Corinth. Consequently, St. Paul must have passed through Corinth on that journey to Rome, after which he wrote the second Epistle to Timothy. But when he went from Cæsarea to Italy, it is evident from St. Luke’s narrative, Acts xxvii. xxviii. that he could not have passed through Corinth.

To this important argument Lardner has endeavoured to answer, by saying<sup>a</sup>, that Erastus staid behind at Corinth, when St. Paul left that city to go to Jerusalem. But at that time Timothy left Corinth in company with St. Paul, and therefore stood in no need of information in respect to what Erastus then did. This Lardner admits: but he answers, though very unsatisfactorily, that the Apostle reminded Timothy of this circumstance, in order to shew him that his presence was so much the more necessary. Further, Lardner’s argument in favour of the opinion, that Erastus was actually at Corinth, when St. Paul left that city to go to Jerusalem, is very insufficient. Erastus, he says, was sent by St. Paul from Ephesus into Macedonia, Acts xix. 22.

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Soon after, St. Paul himself went into Macedonia: and when he returned into Asia Minor, Erastus did not return with him, for his name is not mentioned among St. Paul's attendants, Acts xx. 4. Now, if from these premises we may draw any inference, it can be no other than this, that Erastus staid behind in Macedonia: but Lardner infers, that Erastus staid behind in Corinth.

The preceding arguments, I think, clearly shew, that the second Epistle to Timothy was written during a second imprisonment of St. Paul in Rome. With respect to the more minute circumstances of the time, it appears to have been written about the month of July, or at the latest in the month of August; for St. Paul requests Timothy, who was then in Asia Minor, to come to him before the winter, and the Epistle was probably a month on its passage. The year, in which it was written, I would rather suppose to be 66 than 65. For in the beginning of the year 65 St. Paul was released from his first imprisonment: and between his release and his second imprisonment he had taken a very long journey, having visited Corinth, Troas, Miletus, and, since it was his intention to do so, probably likewise Philippi and Colossæ. When St. Paul returned to Rome after this journey, and became again a prisoner, he found the situation of affairs totally changed, which it is very easy to conceive, and the conflagration of Rome, and the subsequent persecution of the Christians happened in the latter half of the year 65. St. Paul however could not have been in Rome during the violence of the persecution, neither as prisoner, nor as free: for the process against him would then have been much shorter°, than that which he describes in the second Epistle to Timothy. Nor would Demas, Crescens, Titus, and Tychicus, whom St. Paul mentions, ch. iv. 10, 12. as having left Rome, have been suffered to depart unmolested. But if we suppose, that the second Epistle to Timothy was written  
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° *Correpti qui fâcebantur, says Tacitus.*

in the summer of the year 66, we may explain various phænomena in this Epistle. The violence of the persecution had then subsided, yet the fear of a renewal of it prevented St. Paul's former friends from taking his part in public. Hence he says, ch. iv. 16. that at his first answer, no one ventured to stand with him; but he adds, ver. 17. that he was delivered for that time out of the 'mouth of the lion.' From this expression we may conclude, that the danger, which St. Paul apprehended, was not that of suffering death by the sword, but that of being exposed to wild beasts in a Roman amphitheatre, as several Christians had already been, and that in a very cruel manner<sup>p</sup>. As sentence was not passed on his first hearing, a *nondum liquet*, according to the forms of the Roman law, must have been declared, and his prosecutors directed to continue the suit. An opportunity therefore was offered him of making a second defence; and, as the games of the amphitheatre were then over, he might conclude, that he would survive the following winter<sup>q</sup>. The salutations, which St. Paul sends in this Epistle, are from persons, whose names he had not mentioned before: and he is totally silent on Clement, and on other Persons, whose names we should expect to find in this Epistle. Perhaps they had already suffered martyrdom, or, if not, had fled from Rome.

<sup>p</sup> *Pereuntibus addita ludibria, ut ferarum tergis contecti laniatu earum interirent.* Tacit. Annal. xv. 44.

<sup>q</sup> On this subject the reader may consult Cicero, *Proœmium Act. I.* in *Verrem* cap. 10. and recollect that the prolongation of the charge and defence might make it necessary to wait for evidence from distant parts.



## S E C T. III.

*Contents of this Epistle.*

**T**HIS Epistle contains, for the most part, advice to Timothy to oppose with all his power the false teachers, and to propagate the Gospel. As false teachers, Hymenæus and Philetus are particularly mentioned, ch. ii. 17, 18. of whom St. Paul says, ‘Who, concerning the truth, have erred, saying, that the resurrection is past already.’ What they meant, in saying, ‘that the resurrection is past already,’ it is difficult exactly to determine. But it is highly probable, that they acted in the same manner, as many persons in the present age, who endeavour to alter the doctrines of Christianity. They denied the resurrection of the body at the day of judgement as taught by St. Paul: but they still retained the term ‘resurrection,’ that the opposition might not be too glaring, and ascribed to it such a meaning, as they thought proper. They were unwilling to forfeit their title as Christians, and therefore would not say in positive terms, that there was no such thing as a resurrection, because Christ himself had spoken of it. Yet they denied the fact in their hearts, because it was not to be reconciled with their philosophy. In this respect, they argued differently from modern sceptics, who refuse their assent to the doctrine of a resurrection of the body, because they think that the proofs of it are not sufficiently strong to procure conviction; and who assert, not so much that the doctrine is absolutely false, as that no one can prove it to be true. But the sceptics in the time of St. Paul attempted to bring a positive proof of its falshood: and arguing on the principles of the oriental philosophy, which derived all sin from matter, they contended, that the pure and spiritual soul, when once delivered from its body or earthly imprisonment, would, instead  
of



of deriving any advantage, materially suffer from being again attached to it.

Perhaps, Hymenæus and Philetus, who retained the name of ‘resurrection,’ though they in fact denied the thing, ascribed to it a figurative meaning, and made it equivalent to ‘regeneration :’ for in this sense they might truly say of every good Christian, that resurrection had already taken place. Or, as the doctrine of transmigration of souls was at that time not uncommon, they might have taken the word ‘resurrection’ in this sense, and say, that a resurrection took place, as often as a child was born.

As this Epistle was written to St. Paul’s most intimate friend, and was not designed for the use of others, it may serve to exhibit to us the temper and character of St. Paul, and to convince us, that he was no deceiver, but that he sincerely believed the doctrines, which he preached. This subject however, as it is of some importance, I shall examine at large in the following chapter.

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## CHAP. XXIII.

### OF ST. PAUL’S CHARACTER AND MODE OF LIFE.

#### SECT. I.

*Whether St. Paul was an impostor, an enthusiast, or a messenger from heaven.*

**A**S St. Paul was not a disciple of Christ during his ministry, and as many Jewish zealots and other heretics were offended at his doctrine, his right to the name and dignity of an Apostle of Christ was disputed by many, especially in Galatia, and at Corinth. And

though he triumphed over his enemies, and silenced them during his life, yet some later heretics have refused to acknowledge him as a messenger from Christ. But his divine mission is sufficiently proved by his miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost. I have not room to enlarge, as I could wish, on this subject: but I will take notice of the principal objections, which in modern times have been made to St. Paul's divine mission. That he wilfully and maliciously imposed upon the world is an assertion almost too absurd to be made: for it is impossible to conceive what advantage he could have proposed to himself from the imposture. He subsisted by the labour of his own hands; he lost his credit among the Jews by preaching the Gospel; he involved himself in troubles and disgrace; and was at last obliged to seal his doctrine with his blood. If we consider further the undissembled calmness of mind, conspicuous throughout the second Epistle to Timothy, at a time when his death was impending, he cannot possibly be taken for a wicked deceiver, who was disappointed in his hope. According to Epiphanius<sup>1</sup>, the Ebionites propagated the following ridiculous story. St. Paul, they said, who acknowledged himself to be a native of Tarsus, was born a heathen: but that on coming to Jerusalem he was captivated with the daughter of a Jewish high priest<sup>2</sup>, and in order to obtain her in marriage underwent the rite of circumcision. His expectations however, they say, were disappointed, and on that account St. Paul became such an enemy to the Jewish religion, that he resolved to preach Christianity as the surest means of undermining it. This story is so absurd, that it carries with it its own confutation.

Others pretend, that St. Paul was an enthusiast, and that he was not so much an intentional deceiver of others, as one, who was himself deceived. It is said,  
that

<sup>1</sup> Hæres. XXX. § 16.

<sup>2</sup> The name of the high priest is very prudently not mentioned.

that the appearance of Christ to St. Paul on his journey to Damascus was merely an imaginary vision, and the result of St. Paul's heated imagination: that it was merely thunder, which he took for the voice of Christ, and which he fancied to be a call from Heaven: and that his own gift of miracles, as well as his power of imparting it to others, was wholly ideal. The common answer to this objection is, that his former zeal for the law and against Christ rendered it impossible for him to persuade himself falsely that Christ had appeared to him, and called him to be an Apostle. But this answer is not satisfactory: for enthusiasts always run into extremes, and are very apt in certain circumstances to imagine things directly opposite to their former sentiments. I would propose therefore the following questions.

1. If the appearance of Christ to St. Paul, related in the ninth chapter of the Acts, was a mere imaginary vision, and only a phantom which presented itself to St. Paul's agitated mind, what is the reason that his companions likewise saw and heard any part of what passed?

2. How could St. Paul imagine to the end of his days, that he wrought certain miracles, which were never wrought? Were not his senses evidences to him of the contrary? How could he imagine, that he communicated to others the gift of tongues, if they did not speak languages, with which they were before unacquainted? Was St. Paul himself, were the Christian communities, to which he wrote, were his fellow-labourers, so deprived both of their sight and hearing, as to imagine these things, if they had never happened? The prophets of the Cevennes in the present century were the greatest enthusiasts in the world: yet they did not imagine the contrary of what they saw and heard. And though they were sanguine in prophesying, that they should raise the dead, they never ventured to make the experiment. But St. Paul, it is pretended, persuaded himself almost twenty successive years, that he was working what he

did not work ; and that many thousands joined with him in believing the contrary of what they saw. Is this possible ?

3. What enthusiast, or fanatic, ever ventured upon morals, without being misled by his imagination to invent an extravagant system ? Whereas in the morality taught by St. Paul we meet with nothing, but what is rational, and consistent with philosophical ethics.

4. When a man of frantic and disordered brain suffers the heat of his imagination to carry him so far, as to seal his error by his death, his resolution is generally accompanied with a wild irrational vehemence and despair. The joyfulness of the martyrs in the second and third centuries, and the eagerness, with which they plunged into sufferings, frequently bordered on this kind of phrensy. But, when St. Paul saw death approaching, his temper of mind was calm and rational. He went with fortitude, to meet death, but he did not seek it : on the contrary he defended himself, as well as he was able, and felt the usual and natural apprehensions of a man, who expects to forfeit his life.

Lastly, some have contended that St. Paul was not an enthusiast, but a cool and deliberate free-thinker, whose object was to deliver, by a well-intended fraud, both the world in general, and the Jews in particular, from the yoke of superstition. But to this objection I shall not reply at present, because it belongs rather to deistical controversy, than to an Introduction to the New Testament.



## S E C T. II.

*Of St. Paul's profession, or trade.*

**S**T. PAUL frequently says in his Epistles, that he received no pay from the Christian communities, except from that of Philippi, and that he earned his bread by the labour of his own hands: though at the same time he declares, that the labourer is worthy of his hire, and that the teacher deserves to be recompensed by those who are taught. He even ordained, that other teachers should be paid by the churches, and excluded only himself from a participation of the pay<sup>t</sup>. He says in express terms to the elders of the church at Ephesus, where he had resided three years, ‘I have coveted no man’s silver, or gold, or apparel; yea, ye yourselves know, that these hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them, that were with me<sup>u</sup>.’ Now St. Paul had generally several assistants with him: and, when he was at Ephesus, he by no means lived in a narrow or sparing manner. For he hired a public auditory, where he daily taught the doctrines of Christianity<sup>w</sup>, and where every one was permitted to enter without fee or reward. And among his Ephesian friends he reckoned several Asiarchs, who were opulent annual magistrates, and who were certainly not Christians, as it was their office, especially of one of their body, to preside over the religious games, of which the president defrayed the greatest part of the expence<sup>x</sup>. Nor does St. Paul appear to have been in narrow circumstances during his two years imprisonment at Cæsarea: for  
the

<sup>t</sup> See 1 Cor. ix. 2 Cor. xi. 7—11. Gal. vi. 6—10. Phil. iv. 10—16. 1 Tim. v. 17, 18.

<sup>u</sup> Acts xx. 33, 34.

<sup>w</sup> Acts xix. 9.

<sup>x</sup> See Boze’s Essay on this subject, in the 17th volume of the *Mémoires de l’Académie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres*.

the Roman governor, Felix, frequently sent for him and conversed with him, expecting that money would be offered for his release.

That among the Jews, even men of learning, (as St. Paul certainly was, who had been educated under Gamaliel), gained their livelihood by the labour of their own hands, is a matter which is well known. But the question is, by what kind of labour was St. Paul, who devoted so much time to the exercise of his Apostolical office, enabled to provide so plentifully both for himself and his companions. The Greek term used by St. Luke, Acts xviii. 3. where he says that St. Paul and Aquilas exercised the same art, is *σκηνοποιος*. This word, which does not occur in other Greek authors, is supposed to be equivalent to *σκηνορραφος*, and is taken by some commentators to denote a worker in leather, either a saddler, or a maker of leather chairs which were strapped on the back of a camel<sup>γ</sup>. But no man can exercise the trade of a saddler, who leads such a wandering life, as St. Paul did : for a saddler has so many materials necessary for his business, that they cannot conveniently be transported from town to town. Whoever therefore reads with attention the sixteenth and seventeenth chapters of the Acts of the Apostles, and observes how short a stay St. Paul made in each place, and how frequently he was forced to depart suddenly, must perceive that the notion of St. Paul's being a travelling saddler is wholly absurd. Besides, the very employment of a saddler is by no means calculated for a travelling trade ; for since saddlers in every town have generally their fixed customers, a man of this trade, who came a stranger to any place, might wait there a twelvemonth, before he found employment. And even if this objection were removed, it is still difficult to comprehend, how any man who devoted the greatest part of his time to spiritual purposes, and had only a few hours leisure every day for the labour of his hands,

<sup>γ</sup> See my edition of Castelli Lexicon Syriacum, p. 454. under the article ܣܚܕܐ : and I. Helfrich's Short account of a journey to Jerusalem in 1581, under the date, 11 October.

hands, could earn enough as a saddler to supply, in an ample manner, the necessities both of himself, and of his friends. If we explain σκηνοποιος as denoting ‘a maker of leather chairs to be strapped on the backs of camels,’ the difficulty will be still increased; for St. Paul was very frequently in places, where there were no camels, and consequently where no such chairs were wanted. Other commentators take σκηνοποιος in the sense of a ‘tent-maker;’ but the same objections, which I have made to the other applications of the word, may be made likewise to this. And if Aquilas, who was of the same trade with St. Paul, was a tent-maker, it must seem extraordinary, that a man, who was a native of Pontus, in the neighbourhood of which country there were nations who lived in tents, should come to Corinth and Ephesus, where tents were not wanted.

But the preceding difficulties are entirely removed by the following passage in Julius Pollux, from which it appears that σκηνοποιος has properly a very different meaning from either of those already mentioned. This learned writer says in his *Onomasticon*, Lib. VII. § 189. that σκηνοποιος in the language of the old comedy was equivalent to μηχανοποιος<sup>2</sup>. Now μηχανοποιος signifies a ‘maker of mechanical instruments.’ Consequently St. Paul and Aquilas were neither saddlers, nor tent-makers, but mechanical instrument makers. And this profession suited extremely well their mode of life: for, whoever possesses ability in the art can earn, in a few hours every day, as much as is necessary for his support, and can easily travel from place to place, because the apparatus is easily transported. It is therefore extraordinary that no commentator has hitherto taken σκηνοποιος, Acts xviii. 3. in this sense: and still more extraordinary that Julius Pollux has been actually quoted for a very different purpose,

<sup>2</sup> Τες δὲ μηχανοποιὺς καὶ σκηνοποιὺς ἢ παλαιὰ κωμῶδια ὠνομαζέ. Though Julius Pollux says that σκηνοποιος was thus used in the old comedy, and does not quote any living authors, yet it must be observed that the words used in comedy are the words of common conversation, though not always used by authors.

purpose, namely, to caution the reader against ascribing to σκηνοποιος, Acts xviii. 3. the sense, which is given it in the Onomasticon of Julius Pollux. Such commentators most surely have never reflected on the advantages, which attend this sense, and the difficulties, which attend the others.

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## CH A P. XXIV.

### OF THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS.

#### SECT. I.

*General remarks : and statement of the questions to be examined in this chapter.*

I HAVE deferred to this place the examination of the Epistle to the Hebrews, because it is a matter of dispute, which perhaps will never be finally determined, whether it was written by St. Paul, or not. In the preceding editions of this Introduction, I wholly neglected to treat of this Epistle, and contented myself with referring the reader to other authors: though, when I published the third edition I had already written a particular Exposition of this Epistle, which I quoted as well as Lardner's Supplement to the Credibility of the Gospel History<sup>a</sup>. But, since an Introduction to the New Testament ought to contain a dissertation on every part of it, I think it necessary to supply, in the present, the deficiency of the preceding editions. And I am the more strongly urged to the undertaking, first, as I have lately made several observations on this subject, which had formerly escaped my notice, as well as the notice  
of

<sup>a</sup> Vol. II. Ch. 12.



of other commentators, and secondly, as I entertain at present much stronger doubts, both as to the author of this Epistle, and its canonical authority, than Lardner, to whom I referred the reader in the last edition. I shall have frequent occasion, in the course of this chapter, to quote my Dissertation on the Epistle to the Hebrews prefixed to the Exposition of this Epistle: and it must be observed, that I always mean the new and improved edition, published in 1780.

The questions to be examined in the several sections of this chapter are the following.

1. Is that, which we call the Epistle to the Hebrews, really an Epistle?
2. Is it quoted by St. Peter?
3. If it is an Epistle, to what community was it sent?
4. What was the situation of this community?
5. At what time was it written?
6. In what language was it written?
7. If it was written in Hebrew, by whom was it translated into Greek?
8. What is the character of its Greek style?
9. Who was the author of this Epistle?
10. Is it canonical?
11. What are its contents?

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## S E C T. II.

*Is that, which we call the Epistle to the Hebrews, an Epistle, or a Dissertation? And, if it is an Epistle, what is the reason, that the initiatory formule is wanting?*

**A**S the initiatory formule, usual in Greek Epistles, is wanting in that which we call the Epistle to the Hebrews, the question occurs, notwithstanding the superscription

supercription ἡ πρὸς Ἑβραίους ἐπιστολή, whether it was really an Epistle sent to a particular community or communities, or only a Dissertation intended for general readers, especially as many topics are discussed in it in the same diffusive manner, as in a work which the author proposed to lay before the public. But there are several arguments, which decide in favour of the former, and shew that it was really an Epistle addressed to particular persons. For not only the second person plural ‘ye’ incessantly occurs in it, which alone indeed would be no proof, but likewise we find special circumstances, to which the author alludes, ch. v. 11, 12. vi. 9, 10. x. 32—34. and above all, ch. xiii. 23, 24. which contains the promise of a visit, and salutations.

The next question therefore to be asked is: since this is an Epistle, what is the reason, that the initiatory formule is wanting. Several ancient writers, who have undertaken to answer this question, pre-suppose, what is far from being certain, that St. Paul was the author of it, and on this supposition they ground their answers. For instance, Clement of Alexandria says, that the name of Paul was odious to the Hebrews, and that for this reason the Apostle did not mention his name at the beginning of it, as in his other Epistles, that the Hebrews might not be prejudiced against it<sup>b</sup>. Jerom is of the same opinion with Clement, for in his Treatise of illustrious men, he says ‘propter invidiam sui nominis titulum amputavit:’ and this assertion is related by commentators to this very day. But this explanation is so very extraordinary, that it appears to me unaccountable, how it could occur to such men, as Clement and Jerom. For at the very same time, that it ascribes to St. Paul the greatest caution, it ascribes to him the greatest simplicity. The author of this Epistle says, ch. xiii. 18, 19. ‘Pray for us, for we trust we have a good conscience, in all things willing to live honestly. But I beseech you the rather to do this, that I may be restored to you the sooner.’ And ver. 23. ‘Know ye that our brother Timothy

<sup>b</sup> Eusebii Histor. Eccles. Lib. VI. cap. 16.

Timothy is set at liberty, with whom, if he come shortly, I will see you.' Surely no man of common sense would close an Epistle in this manner, if he intended that no one should know from whom it came.

In another place, namely, in his Exposition of the Epistle to the Galatians<sup>c</sup>, Jerom supposes, that St. Paul did not mention his name at the beginning of this Epistle, because he was unwilling to name himself Apostle in an Epistle, in which this title is given to Christ, through fear of placing himself on an equality with Christ. On the other hand, Theodoret says, that St. Paul did not commence the Epistle to the Hebrews with the formule, 'Paul an Apostle, &c.' because he was the Apostle, not of the Hebrews, but of the Gentiles. But neither of these reasons is in the least satisfactory: for they account merely for the omission of the word 'Apostle,' and not of the name of the author. And if St. Paul was really its author, and was yet unwilling to assume in this Epistle the title of Apostle, he might have mentioned his name without this title, since he has actually done it in four other Epistles.

The real reason, why the initiatory formule, usual in ancient Epistles, is wanting in the Epistle to the Hebrews, is at present therefore not easy to be assigned, since we are entirely destitute of historical information on this subject. But as others have ventured to conjecture, the same liberty may be granted likewise to me. As the Greek Epistle to the Hebrews is only a translation, an initiatory formule might have been used in the original, but omitted by the translator, either because he thought the name of the author of no great importance<sup>d</sup>, or because he was apprehensive that the name of the author might prejudice Greek readers against the Epistle, which, as being a very valuable and instructive work, he wished to put into their hands. If either of these motives operated, St. Paul could not have been the author.

<sup>c</sup> Tom. IV. p. 225.

<sup>d</sup> If this was the motive the translator certainly erred.

## S E C T. III.

*Is the Epistle to the Hebrews quoted 2 Pet. iii. 15, 16?*

**S**T. PETER in his second Epistle, ch. iii. 15, 16. says, ‘And account that the long suffering of our Lord is our salvation: even as our beloved brother Paul also, according to the wisdom given unto him, hath written unto you, as also in all his Epistles, in which are some things hard to be understood.’ In this passage it has been very generally supposed, especially in modern times, that St. Peter by the words, ‘as our beloved brother Paul hath written unto you,’ meant the Epistle to the Hebrews: and hence the inference has been drawn, not only that the Epistle to the Hebrews was sent to the same communities, as the second Epistle of Peter, namely to those in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, but likewise that St. Paul was the author of it. Now they who argue in this manner manifestly argue in a circle: for, as St. Peter speaks in express terms of an Epistle written by St. Paul, we cannot apply the passage to the Epistle to the Hebrews, without previously assuming that St. Paul was the author of it. But this is the thing to be proved.

Further, if it could be proved even to a demonstration, that St. Paul was the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, yet as he was the author of so many other Epistles, we cannot conclude, that St. Peter meant the Epistle to the Hebrews in particular, unless it can be shewn, that the subject, for which St. Peter quotes St. Paul, is discussed in this Epistle. But this is so far from being true, that of the matter, on which St. Peter discourses in the place, where he makes the quotation, not a syllable is to be found in the Epistle to the Hebrews. For St. Peter does not speak in this place, as many imagine, of the justification of a sinner before God for the sake of Christ, a subject which is certainly discussed



in the Epistle to the Hebrews: but on the contrary, he treats of a very different matter. The words, ‘account that the long suffering of our Lord is our salvation,’ (τὴν τῆς Κυρίου ἡμῶν μακροθυμίαν σωτηρίαν ἡγείσθε), are explained by what St. Peter had said, ver. 9. ‘The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness, but is long suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.’ It is evident therefore that St. Peter speaks, not of justification through Christ, but of the prolongation of the day of judgement, on which many Christians in the first century entertained very extraordinary notions. For they imagined, that, according to Christ’s prophecy, it would take place in the age, in which they lived: and finding that it did not take place, they began to doubt of the truth of the Christian religion. Hence St. Peter assures them that ‘one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day:’ that they ought neither to be impatient nor incredulous, because the day of judgement was postponed, since this very prolongation afforded them an opportunity of repenting, and might be regarded therefore as the means of their salvation. On this subject not a syllable is to be found in the Epistle to the Hebrews. On the contrary, we find in it assurances of the coming of the Lord, which they, to whom the Epistle was written, would survive: not indeed to judge the world, but to judge Jerusalem\*.

Other commentators, who acknowledge that St. Peter in the passage in question is speaking of the day of judgement, appeal to Heb. xii. 25—29. where the subject likewise relates to the general judgement and the end of the world. But this argument is likewise insufficient; for though, in this passage of the Epistle to the Hebrews, as well as in 2 Pet. iii. 15. the subject relates to the day of judgement, yet the modes of reasoning on it in the two passages are very different. St. Peter speaks of the prolongation of the day of judgement, and argues from it to the mercy and long suffering of God: but we find

\* Heb. x. 25. 35, 36, 37.

find nothing of this kind in Heb. xii. 25—29. Besides, St. Peter adds in the passage in question, ‘as also in all his Epistles;’ the subject therefore, which he discusses, must not be considered as particularly distinguishing any one of St. Paul’s Epistles from the rest. The clause ‘in which are some things hard to be understood’ has likewise been applied in proof of the opinion, that St. Peter meant the Epistle to the Hebrews, because this is a difficult and obscure Epistle. But, not to mention that the Epistles to the Romans, the Corinthians, the Ephesians, and the Colossians, are equally difficult, St. Peter did not make this assertion of any of St. Paul’s Epistles in particular. The two clauses in connexion are, ‘As also in all his Epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to be understood.’ Here the relative ‘which,’ if it refers to ‘Epistles,’ according to the reading of many Greek manuscripts, which have *ἐν αἰς*, refers to St. Paul’s Epistles in general: and if it refers to ‘things’ according to the reading of other Greek manuscripts, which have *ἐν οἷς*, it has no reference whatever to St. Paul’s Epistles<sup>f</sup>. Besides, the second Epistle of St. Peter was not written to Hebrews, or circumcised Jews, but to uncircumcised Jewish proselytes, as will be shewn in a subsequent chapter: and therefore by the expression ‘as our beloved brother Paul hath written unto you’ St. Peter must have meant a different Epistle from the Epistle to the Hebrews.

<sup>f</sup> See my Dissertation on the Epistle to the Hebrews, § 3, 4.

## S E C T. IV.

*The Epistle to the Hebrews was written for the use of the Christians in Jerusalem and Palestine.*

**A**MONG the various opinions relative to the community or communities, to which this Epistle was sent, the most ancient is, that it was designed for the use of the Jewish converts, either at Jerusalem, or in Palestine at large. And this opinion I shall adopt as preferable to every other, without entering into the minute discussion of the question, whether it was sent to Jerusalem alone, or to other cities in Palestine: for this is a question of little or no importance, since an Epistle, intended for the use of Jewish converts in Jerusalem, must have equally concerned the other Jewish converts in that country.

It is true, that there is no initiatory formule in this Epistle, which perhaps was omitted through the negligence of the translator: and therefore in the Epistle itself there is no title, to which we can appeal. But the superscription in all the manuscripts is *Ἡ πρὸς Ἑβραίους ἐπιστολή*: and the superscriptions to the several Epistles of the Apostles have hitherto remained free from that suspicion of spuriousness, to which the subscriptions are very justly exposed. Now in the language of the New Testament, the Hebrews are Jews, who used the Hebrew language, and the term is used to distinguish them from those who spake Greek, and were called Hellenists<sup>ε</sup>: But Hebrew-speaking Jews, to whom this Epistle was addressed, cannot well be any other than the Jews of Palestine. It is true, that the Jews, who were scattered through the Parthian Empire, likewise spake Hebrew, or more properly, Chaldee: but as no man can suppose, that this Epistle was sent to persons, who lived beyond the Euphrates, it would be a waste of time, to shew that the

<sup>ε</sup> Compare Acts vi. 1. with my Dissertation on the Epistle to the Hebrews, § 8.



the word ‘Hebrews’ does not denote the Parthian Jews<sup>h</sup>. That the Epistle was written to Hebrews, is agreed on by all antiquity. Clement of Alexandria says that it was written for the Hebrews in the Hebrew language<sup>i</sup>: on which words no other meaning can be put, as far as I am able to judge, than that it was written in Hebrew, for the benefit of those, whose native language was Hebrew. And in this manner I understand all the ancient writers, who say that the Epistle was written in Hebrew. But where are we to seek for Hebrew-speaking Jews, to whom this Epistle could be sent, except in Palestine? This question I will not answer decidedly in the affirmative, as an indubitable historical fact, but only as a probable opinion, especially since Chrysostom delivers it only as such. For he says in his Preface or Hypothesis to his Exposition of this Epistle, ‘Why did he write to the Jews, whose teacher he was not: And where were they to whom he wrote?’ In my opinion at Jerusalem, and in Palestine<sup>k</sup>.

This most ancient opinion or report is corroborated by the contents of the Epistle itself. In other Epistles, which were addressed to mixed communities, we meet with frequent exhortations to brotherly love and unity between the converts from Judaism and Heathenism, who are represented as equals, and as brethren: but in the Epistle to the Hebrews are no such exhortations, which agrees with the hypothesis, that it was sent to Christian communities in Palestine, because these were not mixed communities, but consisted wholly of Jewish converts. It is true that the author speaks of brotherly love,

<sup>h</sup> I will observe however, that if this Epistle had been sent to Parthian Jews, who became converts to Christianity, the Hebrew original would hardly have been lost; for in the countries, which bordered on the Euphrates, the Christian religion was propagated at a very early age. And in this case likewise, the author of the Syriac version would have translated this Epistle, not from the Greek, but from the Hebrew.

<sup>i</sup> Euseb. Hist. Eccles. Lib. VI. cap. 14. Την προς Ἑβραίων ἐπιστολὴν Παῦλος μὲν εἶναι φησί, γεγραφθαι δὲ Ἑβραίους Ἑβραϊκῇ φωνῇ.

<sup>k</sup> Τίτος οὐν ἐνεκεν, οὐκ ὡν τῶν Ἰουδαίων διδασκαλός, ἐπιστέλλει αὐτοῖς; πῶς δὲ αὐτοὺς ἐπέστελλεν; Ἐμοὶ δοκεῖ, ἐν Ἱερουσολυμοῖς καὶ Παλαιστίνῃ.



love, ch. xiii. 1. where he says, ‘ Let brotherly love continue.’ But he speaks here only in general terms, and says nothing of unity between Jewish and Heathen converts in particular. Besides, as the author uses the word ‘ continue,’ we may conclude that in the community, to which he was writing, no disunion had actually taken place among its members.

Another argument, derived from the contents of the Epistle, in favour of the opinion, that it was written for the Christians in Palestine, is, as appears from the whole tenor of it, that the persons, to whom it was addressed, were in imminent danger of falling back from Christianity to Judaism, induced partly by a severe persecution, and partly by the false arguments of the Rabbins. This could hardly have happened to several communities at the same time, in any other country than Palestine, and therefore we cannot suppose it of several communities of Asia Minor, to which, in the opinion of some commentators, the Epistle was addressed. Christianity, as Lardner has observed in the first book of his *Credibility of the Gospel History*, ch. viii., and as plainly appears from the Acts of the Apostles, enjoyed from the tolerating spirit of the Roman laws and the Roman magistrates, throughout the Empire in general, so much religious liberty, that out of Palestine it would have been difficult to have effected a general persecution. But, through the influence of the Jewish Sanhedrim in Jerusalem, the Christians in that country underwent several severe persecutions, especially during the High-priesthood of the younger Ananus, when St. James and other Christians suffered martyrdom. Further, if we examine the Epistles of St. Paul, especially those to the Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians, with the two Epistles of St. Peter, which were addressed to the Christians in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, we shall find, though mention is made of seducers, not the smallest traces of imminent danger of an apostacy to Judaism, and still less of blasphemy against Christ, as we find in the sixth and tenth chapters of the

Epistle to the Hebrews. The two passages of this Epistle, ch. vi. 6. x. 29. which relate to blasphemy against Christ, as a person justly condemned and crucified, are peculiarly adapted to the situation of communities in Palestine; and it is difficult to read these passages without inferring that several Christians had really apostatized and openly blasphemed Christ: for it appears from Acts xxvi. 11. that violent measures were taken in Palestine for this very purpose, of which we meet with no traces in any other country at that early age. Neither the Epistles of St. Paul, nor those of St. Peter, furnish any instance of a public renunciation of Christianity and return to Judaism: and yet, if any such instances had happened in the communities, to which they wrote, these Apostles would hardly have passed them over in silence, or without cautioning other persons against following such examples. The circumstance likewise, to which the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews alludes, ch. x. 25. that several, who still continued Christians, forsook the places of public worship, does not occur in any other Epistle, and implies a general and continued persecution, which deterred the Christians from an open confession of their faith.

In this melancholy situation, the Hebrews almost reduced to despair are referred, ch. x. 25. 35—38. to the promised coming of Christ, which they are requested to await with patience, as being not far distant. This can be no other, than the promised destruction of Jerusalem, Matth. xxiv. of which Christ himself said, Luke xxi. 28. ‘When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh.’ Now this coming of Christ was to the Christians in Palestine a deliverance from the yoke, with which they were oppressed: but it had no such influence on the Christians of other countries. On the contrary, the first persecution under Nero happened in the year 65, about two years before the commencement of the Jewish war, and the second under Domitian, about five and twenty years after the destruction of Jerusalem.

From

From ch. xiii. 7., though no mention is made in express terms of martyrs, who had suffered in the cause of Christianity, we may with great probability infer that several persons had really suffered, and afforded a noble example to their brethren<sup>1</sup>. If this inference be just, the Hebrews, to whom this Epistle was written, must have been inhabitants of Palestine; for in no other part of the Roman Empire, before the year 65, had the enemies of Christianity the power of persecuting its professors in such a manner as to deprive them of their lives, because no Roman court of justice would have condemned a man to death merely for religious opinions; and the pretence of the Jews, that whoever acknowledged Jesus for the Messiah was guilty of treason against the Emperor, was too sophistical to be admitted by a Roman magistrate. But in Palestine, Stephen and the elder James had already suffered martyrdom<sup>m</sup>; both St. Peter and St. Paul had been in imminent danger of undergoing the same fate<sup>n</sup>; and according to Josephus several other persons were put to death, during the High-priesthood of the younger Ananus about the year 64 or 65. The words of Josephus are as follow<sup>o</sup>. 'The younger Ananus, who had obtained the office of High Priest, was a man of desperate character, of the sect of the Sadducees, who, as I have observed in other places, were in general severe in their punishments. This Ananus embraced the opportunity of acting according to his inclination, after the death of Festus, and before the arrival of his successor Albinus. In this interval he constituted a court of justice, and brought before it James, a brother of Jesus, who was called Christ, and several others, where they were accused of having violated the law, and were condemned to be stoned to death. But the more moderate part of the city, and they who strictly adhered to the law, disapproved highly of this measure.'

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<sup>1</sup> See my notes to this passage.<sup>m</sup> Acts vii. xii.<sup>n</sup> Acts xii. 3—6. xxiii. 11—21. 26. 30. <sup>o</sup> Antiquit. xx. 9. 1.



The preceding arguments, which I have here stated in a short compass, the reader will find delivered more at large in my Dissertation on the Epistle to the Hebrews<sup>m</sup>. There are likewise other circumstances mentioned in this Epistle, which, though less important and less decisive, still lead to the opinion, that it was written for the use of Christians in Jerusalem or Palestine. For instance, ch. xiii. 9. appears to allude to offerings, which at that time were considered as a part of the Jewish, and even of the Christian service: for that this passage has no reference to unclean meats, I think I have clearly shewn in my note to it. But if the passage really alludes to offerings, the Epistle must have been written to persons, who lived where offerings were made. Now this was practicable only in Jerusalem, for it was unlawful to offer sacrifices any where but in the temple. Again, ch. xiii. 12, 13, 14. ‘Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate: let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing the reproach, for here we have no continuing city, but seek one to come,’ is very difficult to be explained on the supposition that the Epistle was written to Hebrews, who lived out of Palestine: for neither in the Acts of the Apostles, nor in the other Epistles, do we meet with an instance of expulsion from the synagogue merely for a belief in Christ, on the contrary the Apostles themselves were permitted to teach openly in the Jewish assemblies. But if we suppose that the Epistle was written to Jewish converts in Jerusalem, this passage becomes perfectly clear, especially if it was written only a short time before the commencement of the Jewish war, about the year 65 or 66. The Christians namely on this supposition, are exhorted to endure their fate with patience, if they should be obliged to retire, or even be ignominiously expelled from Jerusalem, since Christ himself had been forced out of this very city, and had suffered without its walls. It was a city devoted to destruction, and they who fled from it had

to



to expect a better in heaven. The disciples of Christ had been already warned by their master to flee from Jerusalem<sup>a</sup>, and the time assigned for their flight could, when this Epistle was written, be not far distant. That they actually followed his advice, appears from the relation of Eusebius<sup>o</sup>: and according to Josephus<sup>p</sup>, the most sensible inhabitants of Jerusalem took similar measures, after the retreat of Cestius Gallus, which happened in November 66, and likewise left the city. If we suppose therefore, that the Epistle was written to the Hebrews of Jerusalem, the passage in question is clear: but on the hypothesis, that it was written to Hebrews, who lived in any other place, the words *ἐξερχωμεθα προς αυτον εξω της παρεμβολης, τον ονειδισμον αυτη φεροντες*, lose their meaning. Further, ch. x. 25. ‘Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another, and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching,’ is an additional confirmation of my opinion. The ‘approaching day’ can mean only the day appointed for the destruction of Jerusalem, and the downfall of the Jewish nation: but this event immediately concerned only the Hebrews of Palestine, and could have no influence, in determining the inhabitants of other countries, such as Asia Minor, Greece, and Spain, either to forsake or to frequent the places of public worship.

The objections, which have been made to the opinion, that the Epistle to the Hebrews was written to the Hebrews of Palestine, I have answered at large in the ninth section of my Dissertation on this Epistle. Some of them are extremely weak: for instance, that which was made by Wall from ch. xiii. 18, 19. ‘Pray for us, for we trust we have a good conscience, in all things willing to live honestly: but I beseech you the rather to do this, that I may be restored to you the sooner,’ a passage, which, in Wall’s opinion, would not suit an Epistle written to a community, in which St. Paul had not passed

<sup>a</sup> Matth. xxiv. 15—22.

<sup>o</sup> Hist. Eccles. Lib. III. cap. 25.

<sup>p</sup> Bell. Jud. ii. 20. 1.

passed fourteen days. But this objection implies, what is a matter of very great doubt, that St. Paul was the author of it. Even were this matter certain, instead of being doubtful, yet St. Paul had been several times at Jerusalem, he had collected alms in distant countries for the Christians of that city, and brought them in person: and even if the case were otherwise, still it might be said of an Apostle, who had been released from difficulty and danger, that he was restored to the Christians of every country. Nor is Wetstein's argument, which is founded on ch. xiii. 24. 'they of Italy salute you,' of greater weight. Wetstein namely contends, that the brethren of Italy could have had no acquaintance with the Jewish converts in Jerusalem, by which, if I understand him rightly, he means personal acquaintance. But that they really had, is surely not improbable, since the Jews, who lived in countries at a distance from Palestine, sometimes went up to Jerusalem to celebrate the grand festivals: and even if Wetstein's assertion admitted of no doubt, yet it frequently happens that mutual salutations are sent from those, who are not personally known to each other.

But there is an objection, which is really of some importance. It appears from ch. xiii. 23. that St. Paul intended to pay a visit to those Hebrews, to whom he addressed the Epistle. But it may be thought improbable, that he would take another journey to Jerusalem, which was not only at a considerable distance from Rome, but was the place where he had first fallen into the captivity, which had lasted several years. It is true, that before his last visit to Jerusalem he foresaw the danger which would attend him there, and that this danger did not deter him from the prosecution of his journey<sup>a</sup>: and Lardner has observed, that since St. Paul had been finally acquitted in Rome, he had less reason to apprehend any future molestation from the Jews. But on the other hand, it may be asked, whether it would not have been imprudent in St. Paul to have returned to a city, where  
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<sup>a</sup> Acts xx. 22—25. xxi. 10—14.

the captain of the Roman guard, to secure him from open violence, had judged it necessary to give him an escort of four hundred and seventy men: and, whether the Roman magistrates, at the time of his acquittal, would not have cautioned him against going to a place, where the safety of his person would occasion difficulty to the government, and perhaps the shedding of blood. The objection delivered in this form appears to be of some weight: but then it presupposes that St. Paul was the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, which is very far from being certain. I shall therefore consider it in a subsequent section.

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## S E C T. V.

*Of the opinion of other writers on the question, who the Hebrews were, to whom this Epistle was sent.*

IT is necessary at present, that I should give at least a short account of the opinions of other writers on this subject: but a particular confutation of them must not be expected, since I have already assigned, in the preceding section, the reasons which induce me to dissent, and which it would be useless to repeat. From the list of opinions, which I am going to enumerate, I exclude however that, which makes the Epistle written to the Hebrews in general, dispersed throughout the world: for in such a general Epistle, the author of it, whether St. Paul, or any other person, could certainly not have written, ch. xiii. 23. that as soon as Timothy arrived he intended to pay them a visit. The following then are the several opinions, relative to the Hebrews, to whom this Epistle was addressed.

1. That they were Hebrews in Asia Minor, namely, in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia; to which

which some writers likewise add Achaia and Macedonia. This opinion is grounded on the supposition, that the Epistle to the Hebrews is quoted by St. Peter : but as I have already shewn in the third section of this chapter, that such a supposition is incapable of defence, the opinion, which rests on it, loses all support. Other objections to this opinion have been delivered in the last section.

2. That they were Hebrews in Asia Minor, who had fled into that country from Jerusalem, a short time before its destruction. This opinion was advanced by the great Newton, in his *Observations on the Apocalypse*. p. 244 : but this likewise supposes that the Epistle to the Hebrews was quoted by St. Peter, and therefore likewise falls with that supposition. Besides, there is no historical evidence for the assertion, that Jews fled to Asia Minor from Jerusalem, before the destruction of the city : for the accounts on record make mention of no other flight, than that to Pella.

3. Wetstein in his Preface to this Epistle, Vol. II. p. 386. of his *Greek Testament*, contends that it was addressed to Hebrews in Rome.

4. Others, for instance the late Ludwig, suppose that it was sent to Hebrews in Spain. This conjecture took its origin from the circumstance that in ch. xiii. 23. a visit was promised to the Hebrews, and St. Paul in his Epistle to the Romans, ch. xv. 24. expressed an intention, after he had been in Italy, of going to Spain. But this conjecture is again founded on the supposition, that St. Paul was the author of the Epistle, and moreover takes for granted, that the intention was actually put in execution, though we have no knowledge of it, and though five years must have elapsed, before it could have been executed.<sup>a</sup> Besides, the passage itself, to which appeal is made in the Epistle to the Romans, is unfavourable to the opinion, that the Epistle to the Hebrews was addressed to Hebrews in Spain : for St. Paul intended to go to Spain because the Gospel had not been preached there ; whereas the



Hebrews, to whom the Epistle in question was addressed, already formed very flourishing Christian communities, which were in danger of falling back from Christianity to Judaism. Further, the whole Epistle has the appearance of being written to persons, with whose circumstances the author was intimately acquainted : but the circumstances of Christian communities in Spain could not have been so well known to St. Paul, before he had ever been in that country.

5. In the opinion of Dr. Noeffelt, this Epistle was sent to the Theſſalonians, and likewise to the Macedonians in general, and was the first which St. Paul wrote ; for this opinion also is founded on the supposition that St. Paul was the author. It is delivered in a treatise entitled, *De tempore, quo scripta fuerit Epistola ad Ebræos, deque Ebræis, quibus scripserit*, published in the first volume of his *Opuscula*, printed in 1771, and reprinted in 1785. And as the arguments, by which it is supported, are delivered in such a manner, as to render it very plausible, it will be necessary to give a short statement of them, with references to the sections of the treatise, in which they are contained. Dr. Noeffelt contends then, that it was the first Epistle, which was written by St. Paul, that he wrote it at Corinth, and sent it to the Macedonians, especially to those at Theſſalonica. (§ 11.) In Macedonia were many Jews, and likewise, as appears from the Acts of the Apostles, many proselytes to Judaism, who were also included under the name of Hebrews. (§ 12. 13.) ‘They of Italy,’ mentioned ch. xiii. 24. are Aquilas and Priscilla, with other Jews, who were lately arrived at Corinth, in consequence of their banishment from Rome by Claudius, Acts xviii. 2. Aquilas had a Jewish school in his house in Rome (*την κατ’ οικον αυτων εκκλησιαν*, Rom. xvi. 5.) in consequence of which he was known to the Jews of Macedonia. From Hebr. xiii. 23. it appears, that Timothy had been sent away : this St. Paul had done at Corinth. Compare 1 Theſſ. ii. 18. iii. 1. Acts xviii. 8. The Epistle to the Hebrews was written before the first to the Theſſalonians,

lonians, which is the reason why the latter contains none of the melancholy of the former, for the Theſſalonian community had been amended by it. (§ 8.) In ch. x. 34. Dr. Noeffelt adopts the common reading, τοῖς δεσμοῖς, which other critics reject, and understands these bonds, on which the Hebrews had pity, as denoting St. Paul's imprisonment at Philippi, Acts xvi. 24. 26. (§ 9. 10.) At Theſſalonica likewise St. Paul was in danger, and was rescued by his friends there. Jason was deprived of his property, because the avaricious magistrates of Theſſalonica had demanded of him bail for St. Paul, Acts xvii. 9. which he forfeited in consequence of St. Paul's not appearing : moreover his house was plundered, and he himself was forced to quit Theſſalonica, for it appears from Rom. xvi. 21. that he was with St. Paul at Corinth\*. (§ 14).

These are the outlines of what Dr. Noeffelt has advanced on this subject : but I think his representation of the matter rather improbable. That Macedonian Jews, who spake only Greek, should be called Hebrews, is hardly credible, and still less so, that uncircumcised heathen profelytes should receive this appellation : at least, I cannot admit this application of the word, till examples have been produced of its having been actually used in this extraordinary sense. The bonds of St. Paul, or his imprisonment at Philippi, were not of a nature to excite much pity : for on the day after his imprisonment, the magistrates assembled in a body, and requested him to leave the prison, by which measure they made him ample satisfaction, so that their proceedings, instead of raising pity, must rather excite a smile. The case would be different, if the question related to the stripes which had been inflicted on St. Paul at Philippi : but in the present inquiry we are concerned only with the word 'bonds.' If Jason gave bail for St. Paul, and the  
Apostle

\* That Jason was with St. Paul at Corinth, is no proof, that he was obliged to quit Theſſalonica.

\* The term 'avaricious,' which D. Noeffelt applies to the magistrates at Philippi is without foundation ; nor can this epithet be justly applied to any of the Greek or Roman magistrates mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles.

Apostle neglected to appear before the court, the forfeiture of the bail cannot be considered as an instance of suffering for the sake of Christ: and a man's being obliged to make good his engagements cannot properly be termed a confiscation of his property. But it appears to me, that the security, which the magistrates of Philippi demanded of Jason, was by no means for the appearance of St. Paul before the court, as commentators generally suppose, but that he would not admit the Apostle in future into his house: for Jason could hardly give security for St. Paul's appearance, since the Apostle had already escaped from Jason's house, and was no where to be found at Philippi. Further, a comparison of the Epistle to the Hebrews with those to the Thessalonians clearly shews, that they were written to persons of a very different description. And lastly, if the Epistle, called the Epistle to the Hebrews, was an Epistle to the inhabitants of Thessalonica, it was without doubt written in Greek: but if it was written originally in Greek, it could not have been written by St. Paul, whose Greek style is very different from that, which appears in the Epistle to the Hebrews. I might add, that the Thessalonians, when St. Paul wrote to them, had been only a short time converted to Christianity, which cannot be affirmed of the persons, to whom the Epistle to the Hebrews was addressed. But what I have already said on this subject is sufficient.

## S E C T. VI.

*Of the situation of the community, to which the Epistle to the Hebrews was addressed.*

THE situation of the persons, to whom this Epistle was addressed, is evident from its contents, whence it appears, that they had endured severe persecutions, which had begun with the commencement of Christianity (ch. x. 32.), and had since increased, so that several of their principal teachers, among whom we may probably reckon St. James, had been put to death, ch. vi. x. xi. xii. 1—12. xiii. 7. 13. Hence the community was brought into imminent danger of apostatizing from the faith: some of its members appear to have actually returned to Judaism, and even to have blasphemed Christ, of whose amendment the author entertains very little hopes, ch. vi. 4—8. x. 26—31. Others wavered in the faith, while others again continued Christians in their hearts, but were afraid to frequent the assemblies of public worship, ch. x. 24, 25. At the same time it appears from the whole Epistle, that the Adversaries of the Christian religion endeavoured to recall its converts back again to Judaism by arguments, similar to those, which the Jews in modern times have advanced, though in a somewhat different shape: they contended namely, that the Mosaic religion was delivered and confirmed in a manner superior to the Christian, that the former was certainly a divine religion, and therefore not to be abandoned. The author of the Epistle is so very diffuse in his answers, and has introduced so much learning, especially in respect to the priesthood of Melchisedec, as implies, that many of the persons, to whom it was addressed, were well acquainted with rabbinical literature: at least no Epistle in the whole New Testament is so learned, as that in question.

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A part of the history of this community, to which allusion is made, ch. xiii. 8, 9, 10. entirely fails us, which, if we were acquainted with it, would throw great light on the Epistle, especially on this obscure passage. From the words, ‘Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever,’ taken in their connexion with the seventh verse, ‘Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God, whose faith below, considering the end of their conversation,’ I can draw no other conclusion, than that several members of the community had endeavoured to introduce into Christianity some doctrines different from those, which had been taught by their former teachers, especially by St. James. This appears more plainly, when we read further, ‘Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines.’ The question cannot here relate to the retaining of the Levitical law, as a system of unchangeable and eternal commands of the Deity; for this was no new doctrine among the Christians at Jerusalem, all of whom, even after they had become converts to Christianity, remained zealously attached to the law of Moses, Acts xxi. 20. Immediately after (Heb. xiii. 9.), the subject relates to offerings: ‘It is a good thing that the heart be established with grace, not with meats, which have not profited them, which have been occupied therein. We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat, which serve the tabernacle.’ This likewise was nothing new at Jerusalem: and when St. Paul, Acts xxi. 23—26. defrayed the expences necessary for the performance of some Nazarite vows, the ceremonies were accompanied with offerings. See Numb. vi. 14, 15. where a ram is ordered for a meat-offering, and ver. 20. where the Nazarite, after the fulfilling of his vow, is permitted again to drink wine. I am inclined therefore to suppose, that attempts had been made to introduce offerings as a part of the Christian service, perhaps general offerings in the name of the whole community:  
but,

but, as we have no historical evidence for the assertion, I advance the opinion merely as conjecture.

That the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews believed in the divinity of Christ, is manifest from what he says, ch. i. 2, 3. But, when I consider what pains he has taken, ver. 4—14. to prove that Christ is greater than the angels, and in the third chapter that he is greater than Moses, I conclude, that the persons, to whom it was sent, were not universally convinced, that Christ was God: for if they were, they were of course convinced, that he was greater than Moses and the angels, a point therefore, which it would have been useless to have proved by so many quotations. But on this subject I must request the reader to examine my Notes to this part of the Epistle, where it will appear, that the author of it has taken his proofs, not from the divinity of Christ, of which the quoted passages cannot be explained without the utmost violence and perversion, but from the sacerdotal office of Jesus, and the biblical as well as the Jewish doctrine of angels. That many of the Jewish Christians, the Ebionites for instance, considered Christ as a mere man, is a known fact. If therefore a writer, in order to obviate the arguments for a return to Judaism, undertook to convince such persons, that the Christian religion was not inferior to the Mosaic, either in sublimity or in the divinity of its origin, nor to be less valued than the law, which was given by the ministration of angels, it was necessary to argue from data, which they already granted, and not to found his reasoning on principles, of which they would not have admitted the truth.

## S E C T. VII.

*Of the time when, and the place where, this Epistle was written.*

**A**FTER that, which I have already said on the persecution of the Christians under the younger Ananus, and the martyrdom of St. James, I must conclude, that the Epistle to the Hebrews was not written till after the death of the Procurator Festus, in the year 64, which was immediately followed by the persecution under Ananus, the author of the Epistle having already experienced its effects on the Hebrews, who began to waver in the faith, to forsake the places of public worship, and some of them even to apostatize. This date agrees likewise with the circumstance, that in the Epistle to the Hebrews, ch. x. 28. 37—39. the coming of the Lord, namely to hold judgement over Jerusalem, is described as being at hand: for the Jewish war commenced in the year 67, and in 70 Jerusalem was taken and destroyed. But I apprehend, that it was written before the troubles actually commenced, and therefore not during the government of Cestius Gallus: for though I believe, that the Christians in Palestine, at least those, who deserved the name, (for I do not include those, who expected the coming of the Messiah to overthrow the Roman power, and establish a temporal kingdom<sup>1</sup>) did not entertain any rebellious principles, yet I think, if it had been written so late as the year 66, when matters were ripe for rebellion, it would have contained some allusion to the existing troubles, with advice to the Christians, not to take part in the public disturbances.

Nearly the same date has been assigned to this Epistle by other commentators, who argue from ch. xiii. 23. where

<sup>1</sup> Mark xiii. 6. Luke xxi. 8.

where the author expresses his intention of visiting the persons, to whom he is writing: and it was about this time, that St. Paul was released from his first imprisonment in Rome, or at least had expectations of a speedy release. But the quoted passage is rather too obscure, to warrant an inference in respect to the date of the Epistle: and as the argument entirely rests on the supposition, that St. Paul was the author, it can have no force, till this point has been established.

With respect to the place, it is less easy to determine where it was, than where it was not written. Most commentators suppose, that it was written in Italy, because the author says, ch. xiii. 24. *Ασπάζονται ὑμᾶς οἱ ἀπο τῆς Ἰταλίας*: but the inference, which I deduce from this passage, is the very reverse. If the author had written in Rome, he would have sent salutations from the Romans, who cannot be meant by the expression *οἱ ἀπο τῆς Ἰταλίας*: for whoever writes in Rome, and uses this expression, can mean only persons, who came from other parts of Italy. But it is incredible, that salutations should be sent in an Epistle written in Rome from unknown persons in the Italian provinces to the Hebrews in Palestine, and none from the Romans themselves. Indeed, I am of opinion, that the Epistle was written no where in Italy, for the phrase *οἱ ἀπο τῆς Ἰταλίας* implies, that these persons were *out* of Italy, and cannot signify persons, who were then *in* Italy. Consequently, the author of the Epistle, who communicated these salutations from persons, who perhaps had accompanied him from Italy, was likewise absent from that country, perhaps in Greece. Further, it appears to have been written in a place, which had little or no connexion with Jerusalem, for otherwise the author would have sent salutations at least from some of the principal members of the Christian community in that place. Any thing further on this subject I am unable to determine, and candidly confess my ignorance, as to the place, where the Epistle to the Hebrews was written. Nor do I envy any man, who pretends to know more



on this subject, unless he has discovered sources of intelligence, which have hitherto remained unknown. It is better to leave a question in a state of uncertainty, than, without foundation, to adopt an opinion, which may lead to material errors.

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## S E C T. VIII.

*Of the language, in which this Epistle was written.*

**I**NOW come to the point, which has occasioned the greatest debate relative to this Epistle, namely, in what language it was written. On this head there are two principal opinions:

1. That it was written in Greek. This opinion has been very generally adopted in modern times; at least, if we may judge from the authors, who have written on the subject, for perhaps many readers think differently.

2. That it was written in Hebrew, and translated into Greek. This was the general opinion of the ancients; and it is that, which I adopt.

Before we proceed to the examination of this question, we must examine what is meant by the word 'Hebrew.' When ancient writers assert, that this Epistle was written in Hebrew, we must not immediately conclude, that they meant the language, which we call by this name. For this term may denote,

1. Either the language, in which the greatest part of the Old Testament was written, and to which we give the appellation of Hebrew. It is true, that this was no longer a living language, when the New Testament was written, yet the Jews still used it as the language of prayer, both in Palestine and in the Eastern Asia, and it was understood by every man of education.

The earlier part of the Talmud, the Mishna, was likewise written in this language.

2. Or Chaldee, that is, the Aramæan dialect spoken in Babylon and Assyria. This was the language spoken by the Jews of Jerusalem and Judæa, in the time of Christ, as the Jews of Galilee spake Syriac, another Aramæan dialect, though very corruptly.

Which of the two explanations ought to be adopted I cannot at present determine, and therefore I shall take the word 'Hebrew' in its most extensive sense, as including both Chaldee and Syriac, as well as that, which is commonly called Hebrew.

## S E C T. IX.

*According to the most ancient tradition, or opinion, the Epistle to the Hebrews was written originally in Hebrew.*

THE most ancient tradition, or opinion, relative to the language of the Epistle to the Hebrews, is, that its original was Hebrew, and that what we have at present is a Greek translation of it. We have no accounts of it, which reach so far as the first century: but in the second century, Clement of Alexandria, who lived a hundred years, or three generations, after St. Paul, has, in a passage quoted by Eusebius from a work, which is now lost, given the following relation: 'That it was written by St. Paul in the Hebrew language for the use of the Hebrews, and that St. Luke translated it for the benefit of the Greeks, whence there is a similarity observable between the translation of this Epistle

Epistle and the Acts of the Apostles<sup>u</sup>.' I quote the words of Clement preserved by Eusebius, not as historical evidence, but merely to shew what was the most ancient tradition or opinion. That part, which relates to St. Luke, as the translator, is undoubtedly false; for instead of there being a similarity between the style of the Epistle to the Hebrews and that of the Acts of the Apostles, there is really so considerable a difference, that they cannot have proceeded from the same writer. And the clause, which immediately follows the words, which have been just quoted, 'St. Paul did not call himself an Apostle, that he might not make a disagreeable impression on the Hebrews, and because he was not the Apostle of the Jews,' is so far from being historically true, that it is nothing more than a very weak conjecture<sup>w</sup>.

Eusebius himself, where he delivers his own opinion, agrees in the main point with Clement of Alexandria: for speaking of Clement of Rome<sup>x</sup>, who had quoted whole passages from this Epistle, though without naming it, Eusebins first argues in favour of its antiquity, and then proceeds as follows. 'As St. Paul wrote to the Hebrews in their own language (*δια της πατρις γλωττης*), some suppose that St. Luke, others that our Clement translated the Epistle, which latter supposition, on account of the similarity of style, appears to me the most probable.' Jerom likewise, though he doubts, whether St. Paul was the author, says hypothetically, after he had noticed the difference in the language, 'Scripserat ut Hebræis Hebraice, id est, suo eloquio disertissime, ut ea quæ eloquenter scripserat

<sup>u</sup> Παυλος ειναι φησι, γεγραφθαι δε 'Εβραίοις 'Εβραϊκή φωνή' Λουκαν δε φιλοτιμῶς αὐτὴν μεθερμηνεύσαντα ἐκδιδῶναι τοῖς Ἑλλήσιν, ὅθεν τὸν αὐτὸν χροῦτα εὗρισκεσθαι κατὰ τὴν ἑρμηνείαν ταύτης δε τῆς ἐπιστολῆς καὶ τῶν πράξεων. Eusebii Hist. Eccles. Lib. VI. c. 14.

<sup>w</sup> See Sect. 2. of this Chapter.

<sup>x</sup> Hist. Eccles. Lib. III. c. 38.

ferat in Hebræo, verterentur in Græcum : et hanc causam esse *aiunt*, quod a cæteris Pauli Epistolis discrepare videatur.' It is manifest therefore, that these accounts are not history, but opinion : it was taken for granted, that St. Paul was the author, whose mode of writing being different from that observable in the Epistle to the Hebrews, it was inferred, that the Greek was not the original : but of the translator they had no knowledge, and delivered merely their own conjectures. Further, the accounts of ancient writers on this subject are at variance with each other : for Origen, though a disciple of Clement of Alexandria, makes no mention whatever of a Hebrew original, but says only : ' In my opinion the matter was from St. Paul, but the language and construction of the words from another, who recorded the thoughts of the Apostle, and made notes, as it were, of what was said by his master '.

The question therefore must be decided without an appeal to historical evidence, since it appears, that we have in fact none : and it is really to be lamented, that Clement of Rome, though he has frequently produced passages from this Epistle, has not once mentioned, who was the author of it. External evidence then being defective, we must have recourse to internal.

Υ Απομνημονευσαντος τα αποστολικά, και ὡς περὶ σχολιογραφησαντος  
τα εἰρημένα ὑπὸ τοῦ διδασκαλοῦ.



## SECT. X.

*Arguments in favour of the opinion, that this Epistle was written in Hebrew.*

THE first argument, which induces me to believe, that this Epistle was written in Hebrew, is, that it was written for the use of the Hebrews (as some of the ancients, quoted in the preceding paragraph, have related), by which I understand Jewish Christians in Jerusalem. Now as Chaldee was the language generally spoken by the people in Jerusalem, and Hebrew, or, as I would rather call it, Talmudic, was the language of the learned, and also the language of the church, and of prayer, I cannot suppose, that a man, who was master of the Hebrew, would write to a community at Jerusalem in any other language. When St. Paul spake in public before the Jews in Jerusalem, he addressed them in Hebrew, as St. Luke expressly relates, Acts xxi. 40. xxii. 2. : if then St. Paul was the author of the Epistle, it is incredible, that he should have written to them in Greek. It is true, that there were many individuals in Jerusalem, who understood Greek, for instance the Romans, the men of the highest rank among the Jews, with such of the Hellenists as were settled there, and who are distinguished, Acts vi. 1. from the Hebrews: but the greatest part of the inhabitants were certainly unacquainted with Greek, and therefore the author of an Epistle, containing matters of so much consequence as the Epistle to the Hebrews, would have hardly written in this language, especially as the Jewish converts at Jerusalem were for the most part persons of inferior rank. Nay, I believe, that not all the teachers of the Christian community in Jerusalem, and very few among the Rabbins, would have understood a Greek Epistle.

The preceding argument would indeed be deprived of its force, were it true (what Isaac Vossius has asserted) that Greek was the native language of the Jews of Jerusalem. But this assertion, which is contrary to all our historical and philological knowledge, I have confuted at large in the eleventh section of my Dissertation on the Epistle to the Hebrews. Lardner likewise objects, that Greek, if not the native language of the Jews of Jerusalem, was at least understood by many of them. But this objection is of no value whatsoever. Let us take an instance in modern times, and the thing will speak for itself. In Hamburg for instance, the English language is understood by a very considerable part of the inhabitants; yet if the case should occur, that apprehensions were entertained of an apostacy from the Christian religion, and that too among the lower classes, no man, who was able to write German, would think of addressing to the people of Hamburg a pastoral letter written in English. The tradition therefore recorded by Clement of Alexandria in the second century is confirmed by its own internal probability.

It is true, that this argument rests on the supposition, that the Epistle to the Hebrews was designed for the Hebrews in Jerusalem: and therefore neither Dr. Noeffelt, who contends, that it was sent to the Thessalonians, nor they, who assert, that it was intended for the Christians in Asia Minor, will allow the argument to be valid. But since the advocates for both of these opinions maintain, that St. Paul was the author, they must admit, that the following argument is valid, which I deliver indeed only hypothetically, but which no man can confute, if it be true, that this Epistle was written by St. Paul<sup>2</sup>.

The Greek Epistle to the Hebrews, in the form in which we have it at present, cannot possibly be St. Paul's

<sup>2</sup> In my Dissertation on the Epistle to the Hebrews, Sect. 13. I have made some other observations, which tend to confirm the following argument, and to confute the objections to it.

Paul's original: for his manner of writing Greek is totally different, whether we regard the choice of single words, the mode of connecting them, or the construction and rotundity of the periods. Origen, whom every one will admit to be a competent judge on this subject, says <sup>a</sup>, 'This Epistle has not that peculiarity, which belongs to the Apostle, and which immediately discovers his writing, but in the construction of the language is better Greek (συνθεσει της λεξεως ἑλληνικωτερα). This every one will admit, who is able to distinguish the difference of styles. Other critics in the time of Jerom perceived likewise the same difference: for this learned father, in his Catalogue of Ecclesiastical Writers <sup>b</sup>, says: 'Epistola, quæ fertur ad Hebræos, non ejus creditur propter styli sermonisque dissonantiam.' Whenever I read therefore this Epistle, I cannot avoid feeling an astonishment, that so many modern writers on this subject, some of whom undoubtedly are judges of the Greek language, should mistake the Greek of the Epistle to the Hebrews for the Greek of St. Paul. This mistake arises perhaps, partly from the early imbibed prejudice, that all the canonical books of the New Testament were written in Greek, and partly from the circumstance, that we read the Greek Testament at school, at a time when we are unable to judge of the difference of style, and thus become so accustomed to it, that we are rendered unable at a later age to distinguish between the modes of composition, which are visible in the several parts of it. Carpzov, one of the most learned advocates for the opinion, that the Greek Epistle to the Hebrews was written by St. Paul, has made the following concession, in his Exercitationes in Epistolam ad Hebræos, p. 91. 'Si quis orationem Pauli accurate notavit, stilum in hac ad Hebræos dissimilem aliquanto cognoscet esse illius, quo Apostolus in reliquis epistolis usus est. Nam castitas Græcæ, & <sup>b</sup> See a list of Hebrew words used in the Epistle to the Hebrews, in the margin of the text.

<sup>a</sup> Euseb. Hist. Eccles. Lib. VI. cap. 25.

<sup>b</sup> Hieron. Op. Tom. IV. p. ii. p. 103.

no argument has been frequently used by who deny it was written in Greek. But in conclusion as any one who is capable



linguæ, pauciores Hebraismi, phrasæque Cilicum aut Tarsensium, particularum usus elegantior, positus verborum valde venustus, flores hinc inde inspersi, aliæ virtutes bene multæ, epistolæ huic vel eo nomine præ cæteris Paulinis prærogativam videntur concedere.' Yet this learned writer, notwithstanding all these differences, still contends, p. 81. that the Greek Epistle to the Hebrews was written by St. Paul, and that its superiority to St. Paul's other Epistles arose from the circumstance, that the Apostle had resolved to exhibit a specimen of fine writing, and to shew how well he was able to write Greek, whenever he chose it.

Now, that St. Paul ever wrote an Epistle, as a kind of school exercise in the Greek language, and that the Epistle, which he chose for this purpose, was an Epistle, not to Greeks, but to Hebrews, appears, I think, highly improbable. Still more improbable is the opinion of Cramer<sup>c</sup>, who ascribes the difference in question to St. Paul's intercourse with the Greeks, and a consequent improvement in the Apostle's Greek style. Strange, that a native of Tarsus, where Greek and good Greek was spoken, whom we find almost constantly in Greek cities, in the accounts, which are given of him from Acts xi. to xx. should, after the four years and an half imprisonment, which he spent out of Greece, namely two years at Cæsarea in Palestine, where he was under a Roman guard, half a year at sea and in the island of Malta, and two years at Rome, make such a proficiency in the Greek language, as to be able to write in it much better than before.

That there are some, though very few Hebraisms, in this Epistle, to which Cramer appeals, will not invalidate the argument derived from its style: and he seems to have mistaken Origen and Jerom, who do not say, that it is written in perfectly pure Greek, but only, that it is written in better Greek than that, which was used by St. Paul. And if the Hebraisms were still more

<sup>c</sup> Pag. 37. of the Introduction prefixed to his Dissertation on the Epistle to the Hebrews.

on the other side, a confession of Buller, who finds no more that there are no more such original alluding to - &c. &c. &c.



more numerous, than they really are, they would no more prove, that St. Paul was the author of the Epistle, than the Hebraisms, which are visible in Cramer's own Odes and Psalms, would prove these to be the work of the Apostle. It must be expected, not only that every Jewish, but every Greek writer, who was daily accustomed to the Septuagint, would occasionally introduce Hebraisms, unless, like Josephus, who wrote, not for Jews, but for Greeks and Romans, he made pure and classic Greek his particular study.

Carpzov has collected in his Prolegomena to this Epistle, 76—78. expressions, which, in his opinion, betray the style of St. Paul: but whoever examines them, will find, that instead of proving the point, for which they are quoted, they rather shew the weakness of the cause, which this learned advocate undertook to support. For instance, he compares Heb. ix. 14. *απο νεκρων εργων, εις το λατρευειν Θεω ζωντι*, with 1 Thess. i. 9. *απο των ειδωλων, δαλευειν Θεω ζωντι και αληθινω*. But in this example the use of *δαλευειν* in the latter instance, and of *λατρευειν*, which is finer Greek, in the former, must rather lead to the conclusion, that the passages proceeded from different writers. It is true, that they agree in the words *Θεω ζωντι*; but ‘the living God’ is a phrase so common among the Jewish writers, that no inference whatsoever can be drawn from it; and since it likewise occurs in Matth. xvi. 16. John vi. 69. Acts xvi. 15. 1 Pet. i. 23. Rev. ii. 2. we might with the same reason ascribe likewise these books to St. Paul. Again, he compares Heb. iv. 16. *προσερχομεθα εν μετα παρρησιας τω θρονω της χαριτος*, with Ephes. iii. 12. *εν ω εχομεν την παρρησιαν και την προσαγωγην εν πεποιθησει*. Here the whole similarity consists in the word *παρρησια*, a word which frequently occurs in other books of the New Testament, and is used not less than four times in this very sense in the first Epistle of St. John<sup>d</sup>. And even if the word *παρρησια* were peculiar

<sup>d</sup> Ch. ii. 28. iii. 21. iv. 17. v. 14.

peculiar to St. Paul, it would not prove, that the Epistle to the Hebrews was written originally in Greek: for he might have used this word in a Hebrew Epistle, since it had been adopted by the Jews, and written פִּרְהוּסִי<sup>e</sup>. On the contrary, this very example, like the preceding, affords an argument, and that too a very strong one, in favour of the opinion, that the Greek Epistle to the Hebrews was not written by St. Paul. For in the passage quoted from Ephes. iii. 12. is used the word *περιπαγωγῆς*, a word peculiar to St. Paul, which not only does not occur in the parallel passage, which Carpzov has quoted from the Epistle to the Hebrews, but not in a single instance in the whole Epistle. Nor do the other words peculiar to St. Paul, of which I have taken notice in the first volume of this Introduction<sup>f</sup>, occur in the Epistle to the Hebrews, except *καταργεῖν*, which we find in one instance, namely, ch. ii. 14. This example, which Carpzov overlooked, affords a stronger proof, than all the examples, which he has collected: but the use of a single favorite word of St. Paul, and that too only in one instance, is hardly sufficient to warrant the conclusion, that St. Paul wrote the Greek Epistle to the Hebrews, since a Greek translator may have derived it from his intercourse with St. Paul, in the same manner as St. Luke has done. Lastly, that long parentheses occur in the Epistle to the Hebrews, as well as in the Epistles of St. Paul, is no proof, that the Greek is St. Paul's original, for parentheses are commonly retained in a translation.

We are reduced therefore to the following dilemma. If the Epistle to the Hebrews was written originally in Greek, it was not written by St. Paul, in which case we have no ground for pronouncing it canonical. On the other hand, if St. Paul was the author, the Greek can be only a translation, and the original must have

<sup>e</sup> See Buxtorf Lex. Talm. p. 1804.

<sup>f</sup> Ch. iv. Sect. 8.

been Hebrew. It will be objected perhaps, that this is mere hypothetical reasoning. I grant it : but the hypothesis, which is laid down in the first position, I think hardly admits a doubt. Nor has it been called in question, except by those, who ascribe the Epistle to St. Paul : but whoever ascribes the Epistle to St. Paul, will not be able to confute the second position.

But, in addition to these arguments, the frequent study of this Epistle has suggested to me another of a different kind, which applies with equal force, whether St. Paul was the author, or not, and whether the Epistle was sent to the Hebrews of Palestine, or to the Hebrews of any other country. In this argument, which shall be the subject of the following section, nothing more is taken for granted, than that the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews was a sensible and intelligent writer, which I think he was in a very great degree.

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## SECT. XI.

*A new Argument to prove, that the Epistle to the Hebrews was written in Hebrew, derived from the quotations, which are made in it from the Old Testament.*

THE quotations from the Old Testament in the Epistle to the Hebrews are taken, as they are in general and with a very few exceptions in other books of the New Testament, from the Septuagint. Now this might have happened not only in an Epistle written originally in Greek, but likewise in a Greek translation of an Epistle written originally in Hebrew, in the same manner as a German translator of a theological work written in a foreign language would give the quotations from the Bible in the words used in Luther's version. And

And that the quotations from the Septuagint in the Epistle to the Hebrews were really made by a translator, and not by the author, appears from the circumstance, that these quotations from the Bible in the words of the Septuagint are sometimes foreign to the purpose, for which they were introduced, whereas the same passages, as worded in the Hebrew, are exactly in point. If in such places the author himself had quoted the Old Testament in Greek, he would not have used the words of the Septuagint, but would have given his own Greek translation of the Hebrew, as other writers of the New Testament have sometimes done, especially St. Paul.

An example of this kind is Heb. xi. 21. where a quotation is made from Gen. xlvii. 31. as a proof of Jacob's faith, that is, a confidence in things hoped for, in things not seen, as the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews has explained the term, ch. xi. 1. and as appears from the tenor of the whole chapter. To this sense the passage quoted from Genesis is, as worded in the Hebrew, perfectly well adapted. Jacob, foreseeing that his death was not far distant, and thoroughly confiding in the divine promise, had demanded from Joseph an oath, that he would bury him, not in Egypt, but in Palestine with his fathers Abraham and Isaac: on which, according to the Hebrew words of the quoted passage, 'Joseph swore, and Jacob bowed worshipping on his bed.' That is, Jacob, who was then too infirm to raise himself from his bed, turned on his face, in a posture of adoration, returned thanks to God, and embraced in faith the promise, that Palestine, the place of his interment, would once become the residence of his posterity. Or, as it may be likewise explained, he returned thanks to God, that he should lie with his fathers, with whom he hoped to be again united. I prefer however the former explanation. Let us now attend to this passage as worded in the Septuagint, and we shall see, that it conveys no meaning, which is at all suitable to the design, for which the  
the



the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews could have quoted it. The words of the Septuagint are, *και προσεκυνησεν επι το ακρον της ραβδου αυτου*, of which words the most rational translation is, ‘ And he (Jacob) prostrated himself in adoration before his (Joseph’s) staff:’ that is, he worshipped God, who had fulfilled his dreams, made Joseph to be governor over Egypt, and placed in his hand the staff of regency. But then, this is not faith, in the sense of confidence in things unseen, or in events to come, for Joseph was already arrived at the summit of power, and stood at that very time in Jacob’s presence. Other interpretations of this passage, which I have examined in my Dissertation on the Epistle to the Hebrews, sect. 14. are still less to the purpose, for which the quotation is made in Heb. xi. 21. If it be objected, that the passage in question is not quoted alone, but in company with the words, ‘ By faith Jacob, when he was dying, blessed both the sons of Joseph,’ I answer, that this passage has, in the book of Genesis, no connexion with the other: it relates to a different, and later event, which Moses has recorded, Gen. xlviii. 1. as totally distinct from the preceding.

Again, the passage quoted in Heb. i. 7. from Psalm civ. 4. can, as worded in the Greek, have no other meaning, than, ‘ He maketh his angels winds, and his ministers flames of fire:’ for *αγγελους* and *leitourgos* have an article, but not *πνευματα* and *φλογα*. But this meaning is by no means suitable to the purpose, for which the quotation is made. On the contrary, the passage, as worded in the Hebrew, ‘ He maketh the winds his messengers, and flames of fire his ministers,’ is quite to the purpose, as I have shewn in the Notes to this Epistle, p. 100, 103. Winds and flashes of lightning are sometimes called the angels (messengers) of God: and in this sense the law, which was given on mount Sinai, may be said to have been given by the ministration of angels.

Another

Another instance is a passage from Psalm cx. 4. which is several times quoted and explained in the Epistle to the Hebrews. This passage in the Hebrew text is על דברתי מלכיצדק, that is, ‘over the sanctuary of Melchisedek<sup>s</sup>.’ Now this sense is much more suitable to the purpose, for which the passage is quoted in the Epistle to the Hebrews, than the obscure and indeterminate Greek, κατὰ τὴν ταξιν Μελχισεδεκ. The sanctuary of Melchisedek, who had no temple built by human hands, was heaven itself: and if we keep this sense in view, when we read Heb. ix. 11. 23, 24. we shall perceive, that the author of the Epistle more probably wrote ‘sanctuary of Melchisedek,’ than ‘order of Melchisedek.’

Further, there are several passages in this Epistle, which, as worded in the Greek, appear to be inaccurate; but, as soon as they are represented in Hebrew, we perceive, that the inaccuracy is only in the translation. I have already mentioned examples in my Notes to ch. iii. 3, 4. vi. 19. ix. 4. With respect to the last instance in particular, the passage, as worded in the Greek, implies, that the golden pot of manna, and Aaron’s rod were kept in the ark of the covenant, which directly contradicts what is related in the books of Moses, and of the Kings. Now a mistake of this kind could hardly have been committed by the author of so excellent an Epistle, as that to the Hebrews: but it might have been made by a translator, who was less acquainted with Jewish customs, and it took its rise perhaps in the following manner. In the place where εν ᾧ is used in the Greek, אשר בו was probably used in the Hebrew original, which may be construed either with ‘holy of holies’ (in Hebrew קדש הקדשים) ver. 3. or with ‘ark of the covenant’ (in Hebrew ארון) ver. 4. The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews intended to refer to the former: for the golden pot of incense, and the rod of Aaron, were really kept in the holy

<sup>s</sup> See my Supplem. ad Lex. Hebr. p. 390, 391.

holy of holies, but not in the ark of the covenant. The translator therefore should have rendered the Hebrew relative by *ἐν οἷς*, in reference to *ἁγία ἁγίων*: instead of which he falsely referred it to ‘ark of the covenant,’ which being in Greek *κιβωτος*, he translated it by *ἐν ἡ*. More examples of this kind will be given in the thirteenth section of this chapter; but before I conclude the present, I will mention two of a different description.

In ch. ix. 11. immediately after *σκηνης, & χειροποιητης*, is added *τετρεσιν, & ταυτης της κτισεως*. Here the word *χειροποιητος* is so very intelligible, that it needs no explanation, and the words *& ταυτης της κτισεως*, which are given as the explanation of it, are by no means so intelligible, as the term to be explained. Now it is very unusual for an author to explain a self-evident term, and still more unusual to explain it by one, that is obscure: but a translator may possibly make use of words, which in the language, into which he translates, have a contrary effect to that in the original, and represent the term to be explained more intelligibly than the explanation itself. Hence we may infer that the Greek did not proceed from the author but from a translator. Perhaps, where *χειροποιητος* stands in the Greek, the author had used either the Hebrew *לא בדים*, or the Chaldee *לא בדין*: and the explanation, which was added, was probably clearer, than that which is given in the Greek.

Again, if the Epistle to the Hebrews was written in Greek, and consequently the words quoted from the Septuagint were quoted by the author himself, it is very extraordinary, that in the eleventh chapter, where he quotes from the Old Testament so many examples of faith, he should have omitted to have mentioned in ver. 4, 5. between Abel and Enoch, the name of Enoch, of whom it is said in the Septuagint, Gen. iv. 26. *Οὗτος ηλπισεν επικαλεσθαι το ονομα Κυριε τε Θεε*, words, which are so obviously to the writer’s purpose<sup>h</sup>. On the

<sup>h</sup> Philo has twice made use of this passage, in describing the hope, which we ought to place in the Supreme Being. The first instance is in

the other hand, if we assume a Hebrew original of this Epistle, the cause of this omission is easily assigned: for the Hebrew text in Gen. iv. 26. at least in the copies, which are now extant, expresses a different meaning from the text of the Septuagint. It may be said however, in answer to this argument, that the author of the Epistle consulted the Hebrew text, and finding that the Greek differed from it, omitted the quotation.

## S E C T. XII.

*Confutation of the arguments alleged in favour of the opinion that it was written in Greek.*

THE arguments, which have been alleged to prove that the Epistle to the Hebrews was written originally in Greek, are very numerous, but for the most part

in the book called Abraham (T. II. p. 2. ed. Mangey), and is as follows. *Επειδη αρχη μετησias αγαθων εστιν ελπις, και ταυτην, δια λεωφορον ὕδον, ἡ φιλαρετος αναφαινει και ανοιγει ψυχη, σπινδαζουσα τυχειν τε προς αληθειαν καλην, τον πρωτον ελπιδος εραστην προσειπεν ανθρωπον, το κοινον τε γενεas ονομα δωρησαμενος αυτω, Χαλδαιοι γαρ τον ανθρωπον Ενωs καλεσιν' ὡs μονη οντος κατ' αληθειαν ανθρωπου, τε τα αγαθα προσδοκωντος, και ελπισι χρησαις επιδρῦμενου. Εξ ε' δηλον, οτι τον δυσελπιν υδ' ανθρωπον, αλλ' ανθρωποειδες ηγεται θνητον, το οικειοτατον ανθρωπινης ψυχης, ελπιδα, αφηρημενον. Οθεν και παγκαλως ὑμνησαι βελομενος τον ευελπιν, προειπων, ΟΥΤΟΣ ΗΛΠΙΣΕΝ επι τον των ὁλων πατερα και ποιητην, επελεγεν' αυτη ἡ βιβλος γεισεως ανθρωπων, καιτοι πατερων και παππων ηδη γεγονοτων.*

The other place is in the book of rewards and punishments (T. II. p. 410. ed. Mangey), where Philo, after having spoken of hope in general, and the abuse of it, proceeds as follows. *Υπαιτιοι δε παντες οὔτοι, μονος δε αποδυχης αξιος ὁ αναβεις την ελπιδα θεω, ὡs αιτιω της γεσεως αυτης, και ὡs ασινη και αδιαφορον ικανη μονῳ διαφυλαξαι. Τι εν αθλον προκειται τῳ γεφανῶντι τον αγωνα τητον; Το μικτον εκ θνητης και αθανατης φυσεως ζων, ὁ ανθρωπος. Τητον Χαλδαιοι μεν προσονομαζουσιν Ενωs, ὡs εις Ελλαδα γλωτται μεταληφθεις εστιν Ανθρωπος, το κοινον ονομα τε γενεas ιδιον λαβων' αθλον εξαιρετον, ὡs δεον μηδενα νομιζεσθαι το παραπαν ανθρωπον. ὡs αν μη επι θεω ελπιζη.* Immediately after Philo mentions Enoch, whom the author of the Epistle to Hebrews, ver. 5. of the Chapter in question, has quoted as an instance of faith. It is true that the author of this Epistle would have not made such mystical use of Gen. iv. 26. as Philo has done: but if he had quoted from the Septuagint, he would hardly have passed it over in silence.



part extremely weak. Indeed the most learned advocates in favour of this opinion, especially Carpzov, have granted that many of them prove nothing.

1. The most specious argument is that, which is founded on διαθηκη, as used in ch. ix. 16. 17. This word admits of two senses, and may denote either 'Covenant,' or 'Testament.' In the former sense it corresponds to the Hebrew ברית, but not in the latter, for this Hebrew word never signifies 'Testament.' The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews has sometimes used διαθηκη in the sense of 'Covenant,' in the same manner as Moses, whom he quotes, had used ברית: but in ch. ix. 16. 17. διαθηκη necessarily signifies 'Testament,' that is, a deed which operates only after the death of the maker: for the author of this Epistle says in the quoted passage, Ὅπως γὰρ διαθηκη, θανάτου αναγκη φερεσθαι τε διαθεμεν. This application, it is said, could not have taken place in Hebrew, because ברית does not admit of this sense, and could have taken place only in the Greek, in which διαθηκη admits of a two-fold meaning. Consequently the Epistle was written in Greek.

Answer. This argument, if it proves any thing, will prove that the Epistle was not inspired: for it implies that the author of it has reasoned sophistically, and argued not from things, but from the double meaning of a word. In fact, whether the author of this Epistle was inspired or not, I find such excellent arguments in general used by him, that I cannot suppose he would any where have recourse to the arts of sophistry. I would transfer the charge therefore to a translator, who perhaps made a mistake in these two verses: and I think it not improbable that the original conveyed a different sense, namely, 'that the death and blood of offered animals were requisite for the formal confirmation of a covenant.'

At any rate the argument will not prove that the Epistle was written in Greek: for the word διαθηκη was adopted both by the Syrians and the Rabbins. In Syriac, it was written ܕܝܬܝܬܐ, and used both in the sense of

‘Covenant’ and that of ‘Testament,’ as Castell and Schaaf have clearly shewn from many passages of the Syriac version. In the Talmud it is written קִיְנוּ, where it is likewise used in both these senses, as may be seen in Buxtorf’s *Lex. Talm.* p. 534. Mr. Neidel, in a Thesis entitled, *Quod Græce epistolam ad Hebræos Paulus scripserit*, on which he publicly disputed under Dr. Semler, has said p. 24. in reply to this answer, that though the word *διαθηκη* was adopted in the Syriac, still it remains to be proved, that this word had been already adopted, when the Epistle to the Hebrews was written, which cannot be inferred from its use among the Syrian Christians, because they may have borrowed it, as they did many other words, from the Greek Testament. Now the proof, which Mr. Neidel requires, it is wholly impossible to give, for the works of no Syriac heathen writer, who lived in the first century, are now extant: and therefore *ܕܝܬܝܩܐ* can be quoted from none. But whoever is acquainted with the Syriac language, knows that it contains a considerable number of Greek words, which do not exist in the Greek Testament, and which were introduced into the Syriac, after the time of Alexander, during the reigns of the Macedonian kings of Syria. But even if it were certain, that the word in question did not exist in Syriac in the first century, and the Syrian writers borrowed it from the New Testament, still its introduction in the Talmud cannot be ascribed to the same cause, since no one will assert, that the Talmudists derived their terms from the writings of the Christians. More may be seen on this subject in my Explanation of the Epistle to the Hebrews, p. 51—53.

2. The Hebrew name *Μελχισεδεκ* is interpreted, Heb. vii. 2. by the Greek words *βασιλευς δικαιοσυνης*, and the Hebrew word *שָׁלֵחַ* by *ειρηνη*. Now, if the Epistle had been written in Hebrew, the interpretation of a Hebrew word would have been wholly superfluous: and a translator would hardly have added of his own authority, *πρωτον μὲν ἑρμηνευομενον βασιλευς δικαιοσυνης*, and *ὁ εἰς βασιλευς ειρηνης*.

Answer.

Answer. I can see no reason, why a translator should not have added this interpretation. I myself have taken a similar liberty in my translation of the Hebrew Bible, and have rendered Isaiah vii. 14. 'A virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel (that is, God with us).' Nor is it true, that an explanation of Melchisedek and of Salem would have been superfluous in the Hebrew: for Melchisedek is written מלכּ־עֶדֶק, whereas 'King of justice' is מֶלֶךְ צֶדֶק, or מֶלֶךְ צִדְקָה, and Salem is written שָׁלֵם, whereas 'Peace' is שָׁלוֹם. In Syriac and Chaldee the difference is still greater<sup>1</sup>.

3. A third argument, which has been alleged in favour of a Greek original, but not admitted by Carpzov, is, that in ch. v. 8. 14. vii. 3. 19. ix. 10. x. 34. xi. 37. xiii. 40. are instances of the figure, called Paronomasia. Hence, it is said, the Greek must be the original, because it is not easy in a translation to retain a Paronomasia.

Answer. The existence of a Paronomasia in any work is no proof of its being an original, for examples of this kind may take place in a translation, where there are none in the language, from which the translation was made. Nor is it true, that a Paronomasia in an original is incapable of being transferred into a translation; for it sometimes happens, that more than one language admits of a play of words on the very same subject. I remember that I once translated, and that too without designing to retain the paronomasia, the Hebrew words אֶפֶר תָּחַת פָּאֵר, Isaiah lxi. 3. by 'cidaris pro cinere:?' and Luther's German translation of Isaiah vii. 9. 'gläubet ihr nicht so bleibet ihr nicht' preserves likewise the paronomasia of the original, אִם לֹא תֹאמְנוּ כִּי לֹא תֹאמְנוּ, which Luther probably imitated by design. But whether they are imitations of the original or not, instances of this kind occur so frequently in translations, that they cannot

<sup>1</sup> See p. 53. 54. of my Dissertation on the Epistle to the Hebrews.

possibly warrant the inference, which has been drawn from them. In my Dissertation on the Epistle to the Hebrews, p. 60. 62. 63. I have filled more than two whole pages with examples taken merely from translations, to which I now add a few more, which have since occurred to me. In Jeremiah vii. 32. the Greek translation in the Septuagint is, θαψουσιν εν τῷ Ταφῷ, which has given birth to the false reading, θαψουσιν εν τῷ ταφῷ. In the very first verse of the Epistle, with which we are now concerned, the Syriac version has the following paronomasia ܕܡܠܟܐ ܕܡܠܟܐ ܕܡܠܟܐ, where the Greek is πολυμερῶς καὶ πολυτροπῶς. The same argument therefore, which is used to prove a Greek original, may be applied with equal force in favour of a Syriac original. Again, in Galat. vi. 9. the Syriac version has ܕܡܠܟܐ ܕܡܠܟܐ, where the Greek is καὶ ἐκκακῶμεν, and ܕܡܠܟܐ ܕܡܠܟܐ, where the Greek is μὴ ἐκλυομενοι; and ver. 16. of the same chapter, where the Greek, ὅσοι τῷ κανονὶ τῆς ζωῆς σοιχησασιν, εἰρήνη ἐπ' αὐτοὺς, is likewise without any traces of a paronomasia, the Syriac has the following very remarkable one, ܕܡܠܟܐ ܕܡܠܟܐ ܕܡܠܟܐ ܕܡܠܟܐ. In the Old Testament likewise, the Syriac version, in Jerem. xlviii. 36. has ܕܡܠܟܐ ܕܡܠܟܐ, and the Hexaplar Syriac version, in Jerem. xlix. 33. ܕܡܠܟܐ ܕܡܠܟܐ ܕܡܠܟܐ ܕܡܠܟܐ, where the Greek, εἰσαὶ ἡ αὐλὴ διατριβῆς σερβῶν, has no paronomasia whatsoever.

Besides, the examples, which have been quoted from the Epistle to the Hebrews, are for the most part instances, not of studied, but of unavoidable similarity of sound<sup>k</sup>; and that which is taken from ch. xi. 37. is founded on a reading, the authenticity of which is not certain. One example, I grant, is an instance of a real paronomasia, and that too, a paronomasia in common use among the Greeks<sup>l</sup>. Namely, when they intended to say, that we learn from adversity, they said proverbially παθηματα μαθηματα. Now in Heb. v. 8. we find εμαθεν, ἀφ' ὧν ἐπάθε, τὴν ὑπακοήν. But admitting that the author of

<sup>k</sup> See my Dissertation on the Ep. to the Hebrews, p. 63—65.

<sup>l</sup> See Carpzov on this passage.



of the Epistle had the Greek proverb in view, when he wrote this passage, it does not necessarily follow that the passage itself was originally Greek: for a proverbial expression in one language may occur to an author, when he is writing in another. It is likewise very possible, that a person, who wrote in Hebrew, might have the same thought, without any knowledge of the Greek proverb, and the circumstance therefore, that the translation contained a paronomasia, might be matter of mere accident: in the same manner as the Latin ‘docendo disco’ is, when translated into German a real paronomasia, ‘durch lehren lerne ich.’

4. It is said, that if the Epistle to the Hebrews was written originally in Hebrew, it is very extraordinary, that the original so suddenly disappeared, that no ecclesiastical writer, even of the third or fourth century, ever saw a copy of it. This argument I will still strengthen by adding: What is the reason likewise, that the Nazarenes and the Ebionites, who made use of the Hebrew Gospel of St. Matthew, are not mentioned either by Jerom or Epiphanius, as having had a copy of the Hebrew Epistle to the Hebrews: and, what must appear still more extraordinary, why did the author of the Syriac version translate this Epistle from the Greek, if its original was Hebrew.

Answer. We cannot argue from the non-existence of a book in the third or fourth century to its non-existence in the first. It cannot be denied, that of the numerous works of antiquity, many had only a short duration: and of the early extinction of a Hebrew Epistle to the Hebrews it is by no means difficult to assign the cause. The Greek translation, which must have been made at a very early age, supplied the place of the original, which was unintelligible, except to the Christians of Palestine. But the Jewish war, and the destruction of Jerusalem, obliged a greater part of the Christians in that country, to seek a settlement in other places, where they gradually intermixed with the natives, and of course adopted their language. The Nazarenes and the Ebionites, who remained in Palestine, and con-

frequently retained their native language, were the only persons therefore who can be supposed to have used a Hebrew Epistle. But it is well known that they were declared enemies, both of St. Paul, and of his writings. If then St. Paul was the author of the Epistle, it is not extraordinary that they rejected it. On the other hand, if he was not the author, and the Epistle proceeded from a person unknown, its early loss can afford to no man just matter of surprise.

5. A fifth argument in favour of a Greek original, is, that the quotations in this Epistle from the Old Testament, are made in the words of the Septuagint.

Answer. This may be ascribed to a translator, as easily as to the author. And that we ought rather to ascribe this circumstance to a translator, appears from what I have already said in the former part of this section, where I have shewn, that the passages, quoted in the words of the septuagint, are sometimes less suitable to the purpose, for which they were produced, than they would have been, if quoted, as they are worded in the Hebrew.

6. This Epistle is more free from Hebraisms, than most other books of the New Testament, which would hardly have happened, had it been a translation of a Hebrew original.

Answer. It is surely possible for a translator, who is master of the language, in which he writes, to produce a translation which bears no marks of the language, from which it was made. Besides, the Epistle to the Hebrews is not absolutely free from Hebraisms, of which I shall give examples in the following section. Nay, the very persons, who have made use of the argument in question, have at other times, not only granted that there are Hebraisms, but even appealed to them, and compared them with the Hebraisms in St. Paul's Epistles, in order to prove that he was the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews.

To the preceding arguments, Mr. Neidel in the thesis quoted at the beginning of this section has added the following<sup>m</sup>.

7. The

<sup>m</sup> See my Explanation of the Epistle to the Hebrews, p. 65—71.

7. The Epistle to the Hebrews contains many allegorical interpretations, such as were in use among the Hellenist Jews, and are found in the writings of Philo: whereas allegories of this kind were not adopted by the Rabbins, who wrote in Hebrew, the Hebrew language being too poor to admit of them.

Answer. The Hebrew writings of the Rabbins are so far from being devoid of allegorical interpretations, that they abound with them, as every one knows, who has read these writings. They are even so remarkable, that they have been distinguished by a peculiar title, namely, that of *Medrash*: and moreover St. Paul has been accused of imitating this Rabbinical mode of interpretation. To the assertion, that the Hebrew language is too poor to have expressed what is contained in the Greek Epistle to the Hebrews, I answer, this Epistle has been translated into very good and fluent Syriac: and nothing would be more easy, than to translate it into the Rabbinic and Talmudic dialects. This objection therefore proceeded from a want of sufficient information on the subject.

8. The quotation made in ch. i. 7. ὁ πρῶτος τῆς ἀγγελίας αὐτῶν πνεύματα, cannot be expressed in Hebrew.

Answer. The words here quoted are taken from Psalm civ. 4. I admit indeed, with Mr. Neidel, that the Hebrew text in this passage signifies, ‘he maketh the winds his messengers:’ but I do not admit that this is the only sense, of which it is capable, for רוח may be taken in the sense of ‘spirit,’ and מלאך in that of ‘angel,’ as the author of the Septuagint version of the Psalms really has translated these words.

9. The word ‘anchor’ occurs ch. vi. 19. a term, which is hardly to be expected in a Hebrew work, as the Jews were not a sea-faring nation.

Answer. The Syriac, which in the main agrees with the Chaldee, has several names for an anchor, among which the author of the Syriac version has chosen in this instance *ܐܡܪܝܬ*: and in the Talmud it is denoted by עוג or חוג. Nor is it true that the Jews were wholly  
unacquainted

unacquainted with shipping: for, to say nothing of the age of Solomon, the city of Joppa was made a harbour by the high priest Simon<sup>n</sup>, and Cæsarea by Herod<sup>o</sup>. The Jews committed even piracy in the Mediterranean, in the time of Pompey.

10. The word *θεατριζόμενοι*, ch. x. 33. has a manifest allusion to Greek customs, and the notion conveyed by it cannot be expressed in Hebrew, because theatres were not permitted among the Jews.

Answer. Though theatres were inconsistent with the Jewish customs, yet the Jews were not wholly unacquainted with them: and Herod even built a theatre both at Jerusalem<sup>p</sup>, and at Cæsarea<sup>q</sup>. The Greek word *θεατρον* was adopted in the Syriac, Chaldee, and Talmudic, and written, תיאטרון, תיאטרון, as may be seen on consulting Buxtorf and Schaaf. In the present instance however the Syriac translator has used a pure Syriac word and written תיאטרון.

### S E C T. XIII.

*Examination of the question, whether the Greek Epistle to the Hebrews is in all respects an accurate translation of the original.*

**A**S the Greek Epistle to the Hebrews is only a translation, it proceeded from a person, who was not infallible, and was consequently exposed to the danger of mistaking the sense of his author. It is necessary therefore, as far as can be done without a comparison with the original, to examine whether the translation be every where free from error. That the translator has executed

<sup>n</sup> 1 Maccab. xiv. 5.

<sup>o</sup> Joseph. Antiq. xv. 9. 6.

<sup>p</sup> Joseph. Antiq. xv. 8. 1.

<sup>q</sup> Ib. xv. 9. 6.



executed his task with ability, must be obvious to every one who understands Greek : for, in general, his language is perspicuous, his sentences are well-arranged, and the Epistle is more easy to be understood, than any of those, which were written by St. Paul. Yet I think some few exceptions must be made, where the translator appears to have rendered inaccurately. The following are examples of this kind.

Ch. i. 2. δι' ἧς καὶ τὰς αἰώνας ἐποίησε. Here the expression τὰς αἰώνας, which again occurs in the same sense, ch. xi. 3. is, I think, exceptionable. Οἱ αἰῶνες is constantly used by the Greek writers as a word expressive of time, or as denoting a succession of ages : but in the present instance the context requires for it a different sense, namely that of ‘ worlds.’ Now the Jews used their עולם in both senses ; for though it literally denotes ‘ sæculum,’ yet they frequently applied it in the sense of ‘ mundus.’ For instance, they called the Earth עולם השפל, that is, the lower world ; to the middle regions they gave the name of עולם התיכון, and the upper regions, or the heavens, they denoted by עולם העליון. It is therefore not improbable, that where τὰς αἰώνας stands in the translation, the Hebrew word עולמים was used, by which the author intended to express the notion of ‘ worlds.’ But as it signifies at other times ‘ ages,’ this sense suggested itself to the translator, which induced him to render it, and that too improperly in the present instance, by τὰς αἰώνας : for in no other instance, either in the New Testament, or in the Septuagint is this word used in the sense of ‘ worlds.’ If we reject the opinion that the Epistle was written in Hebrew, it will be almost impossible to give a satisfactory explanation of this singular use of οἱ αἰῶνες.

Ch. ii. 1. διὰ τὸ τοῦ θεοῦ περισσώτερος ἡμᾶς προσέχειν τοῖς ἀγαθοῖς, μὴ ὥστε παρὰ ἡμᾶς. Here μὴ ὥστε παρὰ ἡμᾶς  
fcil.

\* See Buxtorf Lex. Talm. p. 1620.

*Handwritten note:* + Handwritten note: See Buxtorf Lex. Talm. p. 1620.

scil. τα ακυθθεντα, ne effluent audita a nobis, would agree much better with the context than μη ποτε παραρρυμεν, which all the commentators have found it difficult to explain. Perhaps, this is another instance of inaccuracy in the translator: and if the original was not pure Hebrew, but Syriac, the cause of the mistake may be very easily assigned. In Syriac, the verb has the same form in the first person plural, as in the third person singular: and in this very example, the Syriac version has ܐܠܗܐ ܘܝܐܠܗܐ, which denotes both μη ποτε παραρρυμεν and μη ποτε παραρρυη.

Ch. ii. 9. ὅπως χαριτι θες ὑπερ παντος γενηται θανατος. Instead of χαριτι θες, some authorities have χωρις θες. It is true that this variation might easily take place by mere accident in a Greek manuscript: but when I wrote the note to this verse in my Commentary on the Epistle I ventured the conjecture that both of these readings were translations from the Hebrew. For בְּחַסֵּד signifies χαριτι, and בְּחֶסֶד, which differs only in the turn of a letter denotes χωρις. At present, this conjecture appears to me to be less probable, than it did formerly: I note it however as a subject for future inquiry.

Ch. iii. 3. 4. as worded in the Greek gives a sense, which could hardly have been meant by a writer so rational, as the author of this Epistle: but as soon as we represent the passage in Hebrew the difficulty vanishes. It is probable, that where ὁ κατασκευασας αὐτον stands in the Greek, בָּנִי was used in the original, which according to the design of the author should have been pronounced יָנִי and translated ὁ υἱος αὐτος: but the translator pronounced it בָּנִי, and accordingly rendered it ὁ κατασκευασας αὐτον. The reader will find a further illustration of this example in my Note to the passage.

Ch. v. 13. πας γαρ ὁ μετεχων γαλακτος, απειρος, λογς δικαιοσυνης, υπιος γαρ εσι, is extremely harsh and obscure. In the 10th verse, the subject related to the 'Priest after the order of Melchisedek,' in Hebrew, עַל דְּבַרְתִּי מִלְכִּיצֶדֶק, after which the author argues thus: 'of whom I have much to say, but ye are at present not sufficiently

advanced to comprehend it, ye are still children, for whoever partakes of milk, &c.’ When I consider therefore the whole of the author’s argumentation, I think it probable that where the translator has used λογὴ δικαιοσύνης, the author had used דבר צדק, which ought to have been pronounced דבר צדק, and taken in the sense of ‘the true place of holiness.’ Or perhaps he wrote דבר מלכיצדק, signifying ‘the doctrine of Melchisedek :’ and that copy of the original, which fell into the hands of the translator, was in this passage defective.

Ch. vi. 4. γευσάμενος τῆς δωρεᾶς τῆς ἐκβράνις, appears to relate to the sacrament of the Lord’s supper. Perhaps מן השמים was used in the original, by which the author meant to express ‘the heavenly manna,’ a meaning well suited to the context. But the translator took מן in the sense of ‘gift ;’ and rendered it, improperly in the present instance, by δωρεα. Compare my Note to this passage with John vi. 31—35.

Ch. vi. 19, 20. Ἦν (scil. ἐλπίδα) ὡς ἀγκυραν ἐχομεν τῆς ψυχῆς ἀσφαλὴ τε καὶ βεβαίαν, καὶ εἰσερχομένην εἰς τὸ σωτήριον τῆς καταπετασματος, ὅπερ προδρομος ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν εἰσηλθεν Ἰησοῦς. Here hope is compared with an anchor, and this anchor is said to have entered into the holy of holies, where Christ our forerunner had entered before. This incongruity of metaphor could hardly have proceeded from the author of the Epistle. I suspect therefore that ἀγκυραν is an inaccurate translation. See my Note to this passage.

Ch. vii. 14. προδηλον γὰρ, ὅτι ἐξ Ἰουδα ἀνατεταλκεν ὁ κύριος ἡμῶν. Now it is certainly true, that our Lord was of the tribe of Juda : yet, when I consider this passage in its connexion with the rest of the chapter, which contains a commentary on Psalm cx. 4. I think it probable that the author intended to argue thus : ‘It is manifest that the Lord (namely he, to whom the subject relates, Ps. cx. 1. 5.) must be of the tribe of Juda, as being a descendant of David. The priesthood of Melchisedek was evidently  
promised

\* In Arabic <sup>د</sup> <sub>ا</sub> signifies donavit.

promised to one of the tribe of Juda, not of the tribe of Levi.' A similar mistake appears to have been made in regard to the translation of the Hebrew, Ps. cx. 1. נאם יְהוָה לֵאדֹנִי, where לֵאדֹנִי ought, in my opinion, to be pointed לֵאדֹנִי, as it is in the Cassel manuscript.

The Hebrew will then signify 'Jehova said to *the* Lord, (that is, to the Lord of the universe). But the author of the Septuagint version of the Psalms pointed and pronounced לֵאדֹנִי, which signifies to *my* Lord, and rendered the passage, εἶπεν ὁ κυριος τῷ κυρίῳ μου. See p. 477—482. of my critical lecture on this Psalm.

Ch. ix. 2, 3, 4. Of this passage I have already spoken in the 11th section of this chapter. The reader may likewise consult my note to it, in the Exposition of this Epistle.

Ch. ix. 14, 15, 16, 17. Of this passage I have spoken at the beginning of the preceding section. According to the Greek text, the mode of arguing is so very extraordinary, that I cannot ascribe it to a writer, so rational, as the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, I conclude therefore, that the translator has made a mistake.

Ch. ix. 19. As this verse is worded in the Greek, Moses is said to have sprinkled with blood, both the book of the law, and the children of Israel. But it is a mistake, that the book of the law was sprinkled with blood. I conclude therefore, that this verse conveyed a different meaning in the original, and that the sense expressed by the author was, 'he took blood mixed with water, scarlet wool, and hyssop, with the book of the law, and sprinkled all the people : ' and not as the Greek translation expresses, 'he sprinkled both the book and all the people.'

Ch. x. 1. Σκιαν γὰρ ἔχων ὁ νομος των μελλοντων αγαθων, καὶ αὐτην την εικονα των πραγματος. Here the antithesis requires in the latter clause a word expressive of 'substance' in opposition to σκια, shadow. But εικων does not admit of this sense, and καὶ αὐτην την εικονα can be construed only,



only, ‘not the image itself,’ which is unsuitable to the context. This is an inaccuracy, which can be only ascribed to the translator: and it is not difficult to assign the cause, which led him into error. The Latin *ipse* was expressed in the Oriental languages by a noun substantive\*. The Arabs, for instance, among other

nouns used for this purpose <sup>صُورَة</sup>صُورَة, which literally signifies forma, imago. Now if a similar term was used in this passage by the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, the translator might literally render it by *εικων*, without considering, that the word in the original was there used in a sense, of which the Greek word was incapable. The Hebrew word <sup>תמונה</sup>תמונה used in Numb. xii. 8. Psalm xvii. 15. which literally signifies, forma, imago, admits

perhaps the same application as the Arabic <sup>صُورَة</sup>صُورَة: and תמונת ידוה יביט, Numb. xii. 8. may be rendered not only, ‘he shall see the image of Jehova,’ but ‘he shall see Jehova himself.’ It is therefore not impossible that תמונה was used in Heb. x. 1. and that this was the word, which gave rise to the translation *εικων*. A less improper translation, at least in this place, would have been *δοξα*, which the lxx have used for תמונה both in Numb. xii. 8. and Psalm xvii. 15: for *ἐκ αὐτὴν τὴν δόξαν* would have formed a much better antithesis to *σκίαν*, than *εἰκόνα*.

Ch. xi. 35. *ελαβον γυναικες εξ αναστασεως τεσ νεκρης αυτων*. Here the Syriac version <sup>ܐܬܬܝܬܘܢ ܠܡܢܬܐ ܕܡܪܝܬܐ ܕܒܢܝܬܐ ܕܡܪܝܬܐ ܕܡܪܝܬܐ</sup>ܐܬܬܝܬܘܢ ܠܡܢܬܐ ܕܡܪܝܬܐ ܕܒܢܝܬܐ ܕܡܪܝܬܐ ܕܡܪܝܬܐ, that is, ‘they restored to women their sons from the resurrection of the dead.’ This would be in Greek, with exception to the verb, on which I will not hazard a conjecture,—*γυναικας εξ αναστασεως νεκρων τεσ αυτων* (scil. *υιους*). Now one part of this reading, namely *γυναικας*, is really found in the Alexandrine and Clermont manuscripts. The meaning, which the passage there conveys, I will not now examine; but perhaps it is something to this

\* See my Arabic Grammar § 66. p. 213. and my Syriac Grammar § 91. p. 215.

this purpose, 'they married again, after they were risen from the dead.' At any rate however I think that *γυναικας* is a remnant of the old reading preserved in the Syriac version. But the difficulty is, to find a Greek verb, which could be used before *γυναικας* in the accusative, and at the same time was capable of being construed with *γυναικες* in the nominative. The common reading *ελαβον* will not suit this two-fold purpose, unless the passage signifies, that persons married, who had arisen from the dead. Now that examples of this kind took place I will not deny: but there are none on record among the instances of faith, which are quoted in the Epistle to the Hebrews from the Old Testament. Be this as it will, *γυναικας* in the accusative gives a sense in this passage so very different from that of *γυναικες* in the nominative, that I cannot suppose it had its origin merely as a various reading in the Greek: and I think it therefore not improbable, that they are different translations of the Hebrew text, and that the one was intended as a correction of, or an improvement on, the other. The Hebrew verb *קָחַ*, which signifies properly cepit, has been taken in the sense of dedit: and in Psalm lxviii. 19. this same verb has been translated both ways<sup>a</sup>. It is therefore not improbable that the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews used *קָחַ*, which was capable of being rendered either by *ελαβον* the common Greek reading, or by *εδωκαν* the reading expressed in the Syriac version.

Ch. xii. 15. *μη τις ριζα πικριας ανω φουσα ενοχλη, και δια ταυτης μιανθωσι πολλοι.* Here is a notion expressed, which is wholly inconsistent with the Jewish mode of thinking. According to the laws of Moses various meats were unclean, and defiled those, who ate them; but no herbs, not even those which were poisonous, were considered as polluting those, who partook of them. The original therefore must have conveyed a different sense, but what that sense was, it is difficult to determine.

<sup>a</sup> See the Supplem. ad Lexica Hebraica.

determine. But, if I may be allowed to form a conjecture on the passage in Deuteronomy<sup>w</sup>, to which allusion is here made, I think it not impossible, that the words used in the original were **וַיִּסְפּוּ רַבִּים** ‘et addantur multi.’ Now in Arabic **سواف** signifies an infectious disease, and therefore a translator might easily mistake the meaning of the Hebrew verb, and render these words by **και μιανθωσι πολλοι**, using **μιαίνω**, not in the Mosaic sense of defiling by unclean meats, but in a medical sense. However, this is a conjecture, on which I will not insist; but whatever was the cause of the mistake, **μιαίνω** is at any rate an inaccurate translation.

Ch. xii. 18. **ε γαρ προσεληλυθατε ψηλαφωμενω ορει.** ver. 22. **αλλα προσεληλυθατε Σιων ορει.** Here the expression **ορει ψηλαφωμενω**, *monti palpabili*, which is opposed to **Σιων ορει** is certainly a very extraordinary one: and I am wholly unable to give a satisfactory account of it, except on the supposition, that the Epistle was written in Hebrew. But on this supposition the cause of the inaccuracy may be easily assigned. Sinai, or the mountain of Moses, is that, which is here opposed to mount Sion. Now the expression ‘to the mountain of Moses’ is in Hebrew **הַר מֹשֶׁה**. The word **הַר** the translator misunderstood, and instead of reading it **הַר** and taking it for a proper name, either read by mistake **הַר** *palpatio*, or pronounced by mistake **הַר** *palpatio*. Hence, instead of rendering ‘to the mountain of Moses,’ he rendered ‘to the tangible mountain.’

Heb. xii. 25. **Βλεπετε, μη παραιτησθητε τον λαλουντα· ει γαρ εκεινοι εκ εφυγον τον επι της γης παραιτησαμενοι χρηματιζοντα, πολλω μαλλον ημεις οι τον απ' ουρανων αποσρεφομενοι.** On the difficulties attending the word **παραιτησαμενοι** in this passage, I have spoken at large in my Commentary on the Epistle, to which I refer the reader, especially to  
p. 407.

<sup>w</sup> Ch. xxix. 18, 19.

p. 407. It has since occurred to me, that *παραιτησαμενοι*, which I consider as incorrect, may be explained as a fault of the translator. Where the Greek words *τον επι της γης παραιτησαμενοι χρηματιζοντα* are used, the Hebrew original was perhaps to the following purport, ‘die sich den von der Erde redenden *erbaten*, und den vom *Himmel* *verbaten*;<sup>\*</sup> and the words, which I have printed in Italics, were either overlooked by the translator, or had been omitted by accident in the copy, from which he translated.

Ch. xiii. 9. *Βεβαιωθαι την καρδιαν* appears to be a too literal and consequently obscure translation of *מַעֲד לֵב*, which, literally taken, signifies ‘to strengthen the heart,’ but is used as denoting ‘to invigorate the body by food,’ or ‘to partake of a meal,’ as in Judges xix. 5. and Psalm civ. 15. See the 491st Note in my Commentary.

Ch. xiii. 15. See the 501st Note.

## S E C T. XIV.

### *Remarks on the Greek style of the Epistle to the Hebrews.*

THE Greek style of this Epistle is different from that of every other book of the New Testament. It is likewise superior to that of every other book<sup>\*</sup>, with the exception perhaps of the speeches of St. Paul recorded in Acts xvii. 22—31. xxiv. 10—21. xxvi. 1—21. But though the language of these speeches is equally good and fluent with that of the Epistle to the Hebrews, it is still of a very different kind.

Among the peculiarities of the Greek style of this Epistle may be reckoned the particular use of certain words.

<sup>\*</sup> See the words of Origen quoted above, in the 10th section of this chapter.



words. For instance, the appellation of *Αποστολος* is given to Christ, ch. iii. 1. The use of *αποστολος* in this sense may be ascribed perhaps to the circumstance, that it is a translation of the Hebrew word *שלח*. For in John ix. 7. *שלח* appears to be the name of the Messiah, in support of which sense Wetstein in his Note to John ix. 7. has quoted a passage from Debarim Rabba: and in the books of the Sabians, Jesus is said to have called himself *א-פ-ו-ס-ט-ו-ל-ו-ס*, that is, ‘the first Apostle.’ *Νωθροι*, ch. v. 11. vi. 12. an elegant Greek word, occurs in no other instance in the whole New Testament; and in the Septuagint it is used only in the Proverbs of Solomon, which are translated into better Greek, than any other part of the Old Testament. In the Epistle to the Hebrews, *νωθροι* is probably the translation of *כבד*. *Ακροθινια*, ch. vii. 4. occurs in no other instance, either in the New Testament, or in the Septuagint. It is here an admirably chosen word, for it literally denotes that part of the spoil, which was allotted to the commander. The expression *εκ αυ δευτερας εζητειτο τοπος*, ch. viii. 7. is really elegant Greek.

In quoting passages, without mentioning the place, from which they were taken, the translator makes use of such terms as were agreeable to the manner of the Greeks: for instance, ch. ii. 6. *διεμαρτυρατο δε πε τις*, and ch. iv. 4. *εισηκε γαρ πα*. In the original was probably used the common rabbinical expression *וְכַן*, which a translator, less acquainted with the Greek mode of writing, would have rendered by *και ειπε*, or *και λεγει*. Also the plural number ‘we,’ instead of the singular ‘I,’ occurs in ch. v. 11. and is continued almost throughout the next chapter: it occurs again  
ch.

γ Carpov in his Note to this passage observes, that Philo often quotes in his manner.

\* As in Matth. xix. 5. where *ειπε* can have no other meaning, than ‘the scripture says,’ or ‘it is thus written.’

ch. x. 15.; and perhaps ch. xiii. 18. may be added as an instance of the plural for the singular, though in the verse, which immediately follows, the singular is used.

Lastly, the translator has several favorite words, which distinguish him from other writers, and occur more frequently in this Epistle, than in any other part of the New Testament. For instance *κληρονομος* and *κληρονομειν*, where the subject does not relate to inheritance, as in ch. i. 2. 4. 14. xi. 7. Again, *κρειττων*, in the sense of 'superior,' or 'nobler,' or 'more excellent,' ch. i. 4. vii. 7. 19. 22. viii. 6. ix. 23. xi. 40. xii. 24. On the whole, this word occurs thirteen times in the Epistle to the Hebrews, though in all the other books of the New Testament put together it occurs only six times, and is used simply in the sense of 'better.' *Μετεχειν* is used, ch. ii. 14. vii. 13. to denote relationship, or participation of blood or tribe. It is used however, ch. v. 13. to denote participation of food, in the sense, in which St. Paul has used it, in whose Epistles, it occurs on the whole five times. To the preceding examples may be added the particular use of *πειραν λαμβανειν*, ch. xi. 29. 36.

Whether the translator had read the works of Philo, with whom he sometimes agrees in his expressions, as in *χαρακτης*, ch. i. 3. I will not undertake to determine. But for the opinion, that the author had ever read Philo, there is no ground whatsoever: since their mode of arguing on the same subject, and on the same passages of the Old Testament, is totally different. It was Philo's object to adapt the doctrines of Moses to the precepts of Plato, for which purpose he interprets his quoted passages allegorically, and involves simple facts in the most profound and often ridiculous mystery: but the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews does not quote and argue in this manner. And, as the two writers have so little connexion with each other, I do not see how this Epistle can be considered even as a confutation of the allegorical dreams of Philo.

Neither in any other book of the New Testament, nor in the works of any Christian writer of the first century, is there any resemblance to the style of this Epistle: it must have proceeded therefore from a person, of whom we have no other writings now extant.

The notion, that St. Paul dictated the Epistle in Hebrew, and that an amanuensis committed it immediately to writing in Greek, is highly improbable: for in such an hasty translation the words would not have been so well chosen, nor the sentences so well arranged.

## S E C T. XV.

*Of the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews: whether it was written by St. Paul: and first, of the opinion of the ancients on this subject,*

**T**HE question, which we have now to examine, is of very great importance, because the canonical authority of this Epistle, which will be considered in a following section, entirely depends upon it.

Historical evidence, in the strict sense of the word, or considered as testimony to a matter of fact, we have none on this subject: and the opinions of the most celebrated ecclesiastical writers are so far from being uniform, that while some received it, others, nay whole churches rejected it, as not being the work of St. Paul.

The most ancient writer, who has ascribed this Epistle to St. Paul, but who at the same time obviated the objection, derived from the difference of style, by saying, that the Apostle wrote it in Hebrew, and that the Greek is only a translation, is Clement of Alexandria, whose words are quoted by Eusebius, in his

Ecclesiastical History, B. VI. Ch. 14. Now as Clement lived at the end of the second, and at the beginning of the third century, he cannot be considered in this instance as bearing testimony to a matter of fact, which indeed he does not pretend to do. But at the same time it must be observed, that Clement quotes the authority of his master Pantænus: for after having delivered his own opinion, he proceeds, as follows.

Ἦδη δὲ, ὡς ὁ μακαριτὴς εἶπε πρεσβύτερος<sup>a</sup>, ἐπεὶ ὁ Κύριος, ἀποστόλος ὢν τῶ παντοκράτορος, ἀπεσάλη πρὸς Ἑβραίους, διὰ μετριοτήτα ὁ Παῦλος, ὡς ἂν εἰς τὰ ἔθνη ἀπεσάλμενος, καὶ ἐγγράφει ἑαυτὸν Ἑβραίων ἀποστόλον<sup>b</sup>, διὰ τε τὴν πρὸς τὸν Κύριον ἡμῶν τιμὴν, διὰ τε τὸ ἐκ περιστίας τοῖς Ἑβραίοις ἐπιτελλεῖν, ἔθνων κήρυκα ὄντα καὶ ἀποστόλον. Pantænus therefore ascribed the Epistle to St. Paul, and endeavoured to account for the omission of the Apostle's name at the beginning of it. But this again is rather opinion than testimony, since Pantænus lived three or four generations later than St. Paul.

Origen, the celebrated scholar of Clement, entertained a different opinion on this subject, and consequently must have considered what was asserted by Clement and Pantænus likewise as mere opinion, and not as historical evidence. The words of Origen, which are quoted by Eusebius, in his Ecclesiastical History, B. VI. Ch. 25. are to the following purport. 'In my opinion, the matter was from St. Paul, but the construction of the words from another, who recorded the thoughts of the Apostle, and made notes, as it were, of what was said by his master.' According to Origen then, the Epistle to the Hebrews was not written by St. Paul, in any sense whatsoever, neither in Greek, nor in Hebrew: for in his opinion, the sentiments only were those of the Apostle, but the clothing in which

<sup>a</sup> This is the appellation, by which he generally distinguishes Pantænus.

<sup>b</sup> See what was said on this subject, in the second section of this chapter.



which those sentiments were conveyed, was the work of one of his disciples, who noted the doctrines, which he had heard delivered by his master, and made, as it were, commentaries on them. Now this representation is very consistent with the contents of the Epistle itself, in which we find a much greater degree of copiousness, than in the compressed writings of St. Paul. Further, Origen's words by no means imply, that St. Paul even ordered the Epistle to be written: and indeed, if he had, it is probable, that a salutation would have been sent to the Hebrews in his name. Having delivered his own opinion, Origen adds: *εἰ τις ἐν ἐκκλησίᾳ ἔχει ταυτὴν τὴν ἐπιστολὴν ὡς Παυλῶ, αὕτη εὐδοκομεῖται καὶ ἐπὶ τῷ τῷ, ὃ γὰρ εἰκὴ οἱ ἀρχαῖοι ἀνδρες ὡς Παυλῶ αὐτὴν παραδεδωκάσι. Τίς δὲ ὁ γράψας τὴν ἐπιστολὴν, τὸ μὲν ἀληθὲς Θεὸς οἶδεν· ἢ δὲ εἰς ἡμᾶς φθασασα ἱστορία ὑπὸ τινῶν μὲν λεγόντων, ὅτι Κλήμης ὁ γενομένος ἐπίσκοπος Ῥωμαίων ἐγράψεν τὴν ἐπιστολὴν, ὑπὸ τινῶν δὲ ὅτι Ἀγκῆς ὁ γράψας τὸ εὐαγγέλιον καὶ τὰς πράξεις.* From this passage it appears, that Origen, though he himself did not believe that St. Paul wrote the Epistle to the Hebrews, by no means disapproved of those, who received it as the work of St. Paul, because, as he had said before, the sentiments were those of the Apostle. Of the person, who really wrote it, he acknowledges his total ignorance: but he says, that of the accounts <sup>c</sup>, which had been handed down on this subject, some ascribed the composition to Clement, bishop of Rome, and others to St. Luke, the Evangelist. But neither of these contradictory accounts can be true: for the style of the Epistle to the Hebrews is neither that of St. Luke, nor that of Clement of Rome: and the latter especially, if we may judge from what is now extant of his works, had it not even in his power to write an Epistle so replete with Jewish learning.

It

<sup>c</sup> By *ἱστορία εἰς ἡμᾶς φθασασα*, Origen means probably only *oral* accounts, and therefore the translation in the Benedictine dition, '*scriptores quorum monumenta ad nos usque pervenerunt*,' is not accurate.

It is true, that Origen has sometimes quoted this Epistle under the title of ‘St. Paul’s Epistle to the Hebrews’<sup>d</sup>: but in so doing, he followed only the common custom, and gave the appellation to this Epistle, by which it was usually denoted, without entering into the merits of that appellation. In like manner many modern commentators, who doubt the authenticity of the two first chapters of St. Matthew’s, and the eleven last verses of St. Mark’s Gospel, still quote them, agreeably to the common practice, under the name of St. Matthew and St. Mark, without signifying at the time of quoting, that they entertained doubts in regard to the authors. However it must be observed, that Origen does not always quote the Epistle to the Hebrews under the title of St. Paul’s Epistle. On the contrary, in his letter to Africanus<sup>e</sup>, where he speaks of the history of Susanna and Daniel, and observes, that many accounts, which are not to be found in the Hebrew Bible, are preserved by oral tradition, or in apocryphal writings, he appeals<sup>f</sup> to the word *επισθησαν*, Heb. xi. 37. as referring to Isaiah, who, according to the tradition of the Jews, and an apocryphal book, was sawed asunder. Here he does not mention St. Paul as the author, but writes, *ὑπο της προς Ἑβραιους επισολης*, and *ὁ την προς Ἑβραιους γραψας*: and afterwards he adds<sup>g</sup>, *αλλ’ εικος τινα θλιβομενον ὑπο της εις ταυτα ὑποδειξως συγχρησεσθαι τῷ βιβληματι των αθετεντων την επισολην, ὡς Παυλῃ προς ὁν αλλων λογων κατ’ ἰδιαν χρηζομεν, εις αποδειξιν τε ειναι Παυλῃ την επισολην*. In this passage it is evident, that Origen understood persons, who not only denied, that the Epistle was written by St. Paul, but rejected it on that account as uncanonical: and that he himself considered the question as determinable, not from historical or external evidence, but merely from internal

<sup>d</sup> These examples may be seen in Lardner’s *Credibility*, Vol. III. p. 249, 250.

<sup>e</sup> Origen. *Op. T. I.* p. 12—30. ed. Benedict.

<sup>f</sup> *Sect. 9.* p. 19.

<sup>g</sup> *Pag. 20.*

internal evidence. What would be the result of the inquiry, he has on this occasion left unnoticed: but from the passage, quoted in the former part of this section, we see, that Origen allowed, that the Epistle was St. Paul's only in this sense, that the Apostle was the author of the sentiments contained in it, not that he was the author of the composition itself.

Such was the uncertain state of the question in the second and third centuries: nor have the following ages produced any new discoveries, which might bring it nearer to an absolute decision. It would be useless to enumerate the fathers of the fourth and subsequent centuries, who have quoted this Epistle under the name of St. Paul<sup>b</sup>. Their number, let it be ever so great, can never decide the question; for if Origen could obtain no certain historical information in the third century, it cannot be expected from later writers, and consequently their acceding to the opinion, that St. Paul was the author, can give it no additional weight. Besides, it is not improbable, that many of them, like Origen, quoted this Epistle under the name of St. Paul, without intending to signify their full persuasion, that St. Paul was the author. Eusebius himself, though he ascribed fourteen Epistles to St. Paul, and included therefore the Epistle to the Hebrews, is yet so candid as to acknowledge, that many in his time rejected it, as not written by the Apostle, especially the church of Rome<sup>i</sup>. Now the circumstance, that the church of Rome did not receive this Epistle as a work of St. Paul, is of some importance in the present inquiry, because most commentators, who ascribe the Epistle to St. Paul, contend, that he wrote it in Rome. But an Epistle written by St. Paul in Rome could not have remained unknown to the Romans, and therefore their rejection of the Epistle to the Hebrews is very unfavour-

<sup>b</sup> Whoever wishes to see an enumeration of them may consult Lardner's Supplement, Vol. II. Ch. xii. Sect. 14. § 3.

<sup>i</sup> Hist. Eccles. Lib. III. c. 3.



unfavourable to it. At the same time it must be observed, that this argument operates only against those, who assert, that St. Paul wrote it in Rome, not against those, who contend, that he wrote it elsewhere.

Jerom, the most learned of all the fathers of the fourth or fifth centuries, has, in his Catalogue of Ecclesiastical Writers, under the article Paulus, given the following account of this Epistle<sup>k</sup>. ‘*Epistola, quæ ad Hebræos fertur, non ejus esse creditur, propter styli sermonisque dissonantiam, sed vel Barnabæ, juxta Tertullianum, vel Lucæ evangelistæ, juxta quosdam, vel Clementis, Romanæ postea ecclesiæ episcopi, quem aiunt ipsi adjunctum sententias Pauli proprio ordinasse et ornasse sermone. Vel certe, quia Paulus scribebat ad Hebræos, et propter invidiam sui apud eos nominis titulum in principio salutationis amputaverat. Scripserat, ut Hebræus Hebræis, Hebraice, id est, suo eloquio, disertissime, ut ea, quæ eloquenter scripta fuerant in Hebræo, eloquentius verterentur in Græcum: et hanc causam esse, quod a cæteris Pauli epistolis discrepare videatur.*’ It appears then, that Jerom at the end of the fourth century had not been able to obtain more certain historical information, than Clement and Origen in the second and third centuries. How then can we, at the end of the eighteenth century, pretend to determine the question? Further, it must be remarked, that among the opinions reported by Jerom, relative to the author of the Epistle, the name of Barnabas occurs, in addition to those of St. Luke and Clement of Rome, who have been already mentioned as reputed authors of it. This again is mere conjecture, and wholly unsupported by historical evidence. It is however less liable to objection, than the two other opinions, for no writings, at least no genuine writings of Barnabas are now extant: and therefore we cannot oppose to this opinion a difference of style, as may be justly done to the opinion, which ascribes the Epistle  
to

<sup>k</sup> Tom. III. P. ii. 103, 104. ed. Benedict.



to St. Luke, and still more so to that, which ascribes it to Clement of Rome. Further, it is evident, that the Epistle to the Hebrews was written not only by a native Jew, but by one, who was well versed in Jewish literature.

Lastly, it deserves to be noticed in the present inquiry, that in some manuscripts the Epistle to the Hebrews is placed between the second Epistle to the Theſſalonians, and the first Epistle to Timothy: for instance, in the celebrated Codex Vaticanus, and in the Codex Upsalensis collated by Aurivillius. Epiphanius likewise, in his 42d Hereſy, observes, that several Greek MSS. in his time had the same arrangement, for he says, p. 373. *αλλα δε αντιγραφα εχει την προς Εβραιους δεκατην, προ των δυο προς Τιμοθεον, και Τιτον, και Φιλημονα.* Now this arrangement, according to which the Epistle to the Hebrews is placed among St. Paul's Epistles, implies, that they, who formed it, were of opinion, that it was written by St. Paul: whereas its common position after the Epistle to Philemon may be construed as denoting, either that it is the fourteenth (in order) of St. Paul's Epistles, or that it is an Epistle annexed to those of St. Paul. If the thought had sooner occurred to me, I would have inquired, what other manuscripts contain the Epistle to the Hebrews in the same place as the two just mentioned, because they might form a kind of edition of St. Paul's Epistles, in which that to the Hebrews was ascribed to him as the author. Perhaps however some future critic will institute this inquiry.

## S E C T. XVI.

*Of the internal marks or characters in the Epistle itself, from which an inference may be drawn, either in favour of or against the opinion, that St. Paul was the author.*

**I**T appears, from the preceding Section, that our present question is not to be determined by external evidence, because the accounts of ecclesiastical writers on this subject are very uncertain, and contradictory. Our only resource therefore is internal evidence: but this again leaves us in the same state of uncertainty as the external. Lardner<sup>1</sup> has already stated the arguments, which may be deduced from the contents of the Epistle, either for or against the question, to which I refer the reader, that he may determine for himself. For my own part, I do not agree with Lardner in all the arguments, which he has produced: but as it would be tedious to enumerate and review them, I will confine myself at present to such remarks as have occurred to me in the study of this Epistle.

In the first place I must repeat, what has been already asserted, that the Greek style of the Epistle to the Hebrews is so very different from the style of St. Paul, that he cannot possibly have been the author of the Greek text. Whoever attempts, therefore, to shew that St. Paul was the author, must first acknowledge that the Greek is only a translation, and that the original was Hebrew<sup>m</sup>.

In Ch. xiii. 23. the author of this Epistle says, Γινωσκετε τον αδελφον Τιμοθεον απολελυμενον, μεθ' ε, εαν ταχιον ερχηται, οψομαι υμας. Here the name of Timothy, the usual companion of St. Paul, with whom the author of this

<sup>1</sup> Supplement, Vol. II. p. 343.

<sup>m</sup> On this head, my opinion is diametrically opposite to that of Lardner.

this Epistle proposes to visit the Hebrews, immediately suggests the notion, that St. Paul was the author. Yet it affords no absolute proof: for other persons, beside St. Paul, may have formed the design of travelling to Jerusalem in company with Timothy. Some commentators, indeed, translate ἀπολελυμενον in this passage by ‘sent abroad on an errand’; and say, that scarcely any one can be thought of, beside St. Paul, who would have sent Timothy abroad upon any service of the Gospel<sup>a</sup>. But this mode of reasoning is fallacious. For ἀπολελυμενον signifies merely ‘gone away,’ and by no means implies that Timothy was *sent* away by the author of this Epistle. This passage, therefore, does not prove that it was written by St. Paul.

If the common reading, ch. x. 34. καὶ γὰρ τοῖς δεσμοῖς μὲ συνεπαθήσατε, ‘for ye had compassion on my bonds,’ be the genuine reading, it was well adapted to St. Paul as the author, who at Jerusalem fell into the captivity, which lasted so many years: especially if we take into consideration ch. xiii. 18, 19. where the author desires the Hebrews to pray for him, that he may be the sooner restored to them. But the common reading at ch. x. 34. is so very uncertain, that no argument can safely be founded on it; for many good authorities, instead of τοῖς δεσμοῖς μὲ, ‘my bonds,’ have τοῖς δεσμοῖς, ‘the prisoners;’ which gives the passage a very different sense; and I am wholly unable to determine, which of the two readings deserves the preference, till the question has been decided, who was the author of the Epistle. It appears, indeed, from ch. xiii. 19. that the author had been forced away from the Hebrews, and that he wished to be restored to them. This is applicable to St. Paul, who had been taken prisoner at Jerusalem, and afterwards carried to Rome: but St. Paul is not the only person, to whom it is applicable, for other persons might at the same time have been in prison for the sake of the Gospel. Besides, there is a real inconvenience attending the application of this passage to St. Paul: for  
the

<sup>a</sup> See Lardner, p. 359.

the writer promises, ch. xiii. 23. a visit to the Hebrews, on the return of Timothy. This is a promise, which no one could make, who was still in prison; and therefore I would translate ch. xiii. 19. ἵνα ταχὺν ἀποκρίσασθαι ὑμῖν, ‘that I may have a good and speedy journey to you.’

In fact, the two passages, ch. xiii. 19. 23. in which the author expresses an intention of visiting the Hebrews, make it improbable that the author was St. Paul: for he would hardly have formed the resolution of going again to Jerusalem, immediately after he was released from his imprisonment in Rome. Not only, he had no vocation to Jerusalem, as Apostle of the Gentiles, but it would have been contrary to his avowed principles, to preach the Gospel there, since he expressly says in Rom. xv. 20. that he strived to preach the Gospel, not where Christ was named, lest he should build on another man's foundation. It is true, that this is not the only motive, which might have induced him to go to Jerusalem, for he might have gone thither to carry alms for the poorer brethren in Judæa, as he had formerly done, when the Macedonians and Achæans contributed for that purpose. But this journey he could not well have undertaken immediately after his release, since, before he could carry alms to Jerusalem, it was necessary, that he should first collect them. And it is a matter of doubt, whether this motive would really have induced him to expose himself again in a place, where his life had been in danger; for he might surely have found a trusty person, by whom he might have sent the contributions, if any had been made. That St. Paul never shrunk from danger, where the cause of Christianity was concerned, I readily grant: yet he had certainly too much good sense to expose himself without necessity, especially in a place, where the inhabitants were so incensed against him, that the commander of the Roman garrison found it necessary to give an escort of four hundred and seventy men, in  
order



order to convey him safely to Cæsarea°. In fact, the cause of Christianity did not require, that he should go again to Jerusalem: and therefore the sufferings, which he might have endured in consequence of such a journey, could not have been called sufferings for the sake of Christ. Besides, the journey would not only have been imprudent, but really improper: for St. Paul's presence in Jerusalem would necessarily have occasioned a tumult, which every good citizen will avoid, out of regard to the state, of which he is a member. Lardner indeed asserts, that St. Paul, after his release in Rome, and the avowal of his innocence, might have shewed himself without danger in Jerusalem. But this is certainly not true. For the band of desperate wretches, who had made a vow to murder him, would have paid no regard to the declaration, which the emperor had made of St. Paul's innocence: the Sicarii, of whom Josephus speaks, were become extremely numerous in Jerusalem: and the whole country of Palestine was already ripe for rebellion. Under these circumstances, I think, that a Roman court of justice, if intimation had been given at the time of St. Paul's acquital, that he intended to go again to Jerusalem, would have cautioned him against appearing in a place, where his presence might excite sedition, and where the protection of his person would not only give trouble to the magistrates, but might occasion the shedding of blood.

Ch. vi. 3. *καὶ τὰτο ποιήσομεν, εἰνπερ ἐπιτρέπη ὁ Θεός,* implies, it is said, that the author was under the peculiar guidance of God, and that he awaited God's immediate commands. Hence it is inferred, that the author was an Apostle, which leads to the conclusion, that the author was St. Paul. But there is no necessity for supposing, that the words, *εἰνπερ ἐπιτρέπη ὁ Θεός*, imply a supernatural communication with the Deity, since every man, inspired, or not inspired, may say, 'This I will do, if God permit.' And, if they had really the  
sense,

sense, which has been ascribed to them, still they would not apply to St. Paul alone: for Barnabas, to whom Tertullian assigns the Epistle, might have written in this manner.

Ch. x. 33. *θεατριζόμενοι* is an expression perfectly agreeable to St. Paul's mode of writing, as appears from 1 Cor. iv. 9.: but since other writers may likewise have used the same metaphor, the application of it in the present instance shews only, that St. Paul might have written the Epistle to the Hebrews, not that he really did write it.

Ch. x. 30. *ἐμοὶ ἐνδίκησις, ἐγὼ ἀνταποδώσω* is a quotation from Deut. xxxii. 35. which differs both from the Hebrew text and from the Septuagint: and this passage is again quoted in the very same words, in Rom. xii. 19. This agreement in a reading, which has hitherto been discovered in no other place<sup>p</sup>, might form a presumptive argument, that both quotations were made by the same person, and consequently, that the Epistle to the Hebrews was written by St. Paul. But the argument is not decisive: for it is very possible, that in the first century there were manuscripts of the Septuagint with this reading in Deut. xxxii. 35. from which St. Paul might have copied in Rom. xii. 19. and the translator of this Epistle, in Heb. x. 30.

Lastly, the Epistle to the Hebrews is doctrinal in the former part, as far as ch. x. 19. and the remaining part is exhortatory. This is agreeable to St. Paul's manner. Likewise the doctrines themselves, and the literature displayed in the Epistle to the Hebrews, are in every sense worthy of St. Paul. But on the other hand, in the mode of treating the same subject, there is a visible difference between the Epistle to the Hebrews, and St. Paul's Epistles. In the former the matter is dilated, in the latter compressed: in the one the arguments are drawn out at full length, and are easier to be understood, in the other they are so contracted,

<sup>p</sup> See the New Orient. Bibl. Vol. V. p. 231—236.

tracted, and so much is left to be supplied by the reader, that it is sometimes difficult to discover the Apostle's meaning. Five chapters especially of the Epistle to the Hebrews<sup>a</sup> display a copiousness of argument, which appears to be inconsistent with the concise manner of St. Paul.

The arguments therefore on both sides of the question are nearly of equal weight: but if there is any preponderance, it is in favour of the opinion, that St. Paul was not the author. For the design of visiting Jerusalem, which the author of this Epistle expresses, would hardly have been formed by St. Paul on his release from imprisonment. And if St. Paul was really the author, it is difficult to account for the omission of his name at the opening of the Epistle, since the omission cannot well be ascribed to a translator, who would not have neglected to retain a name, which gave authority to the Epistle<sup>r</sup>.

After all then, we must confess, that we do not know, whether St. Paul wrote this Epistle, or not. An absolute decision on this subject is indeed to be wished, but, in my opinion, not to be obtained.

<sup>a</sup> Chap. vi—x.

<sup>r</sup> See Sect. 2. of this Chapter.

## S E C T. XVII.

*Examination of the opinion entertained by some of the ancients, that Barnabas was the author.*

**T**HAT Barnabas was the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews was formerly a not unusual opinion in the Latin church. Now this opinion in itself contains nothing improbable: for Barnabas was by birth a Levite, and well acquainted with the Jewish laws, and with the Jewish literature. Consequently a learned Epistle, like that to the Hebrews, is such as might be expected from his hand. And, if that which is commonly called the Epistle of Barnabas, is, as many critics believe, a forgery under his name, we have no writings of Barnabas now extant, which we can oppose to the Epistle to the Hebrews, and thence argue against this opinion from a difference of style. On this ground therefore it would be difficult to confute the opinion, since no one can prove that Barnabas was unable to write as good Greek, as that which is contained in the Epistle to the Hebrews. But, if on the other hand the Epistle ascribed to Barnabas be really genuine, as other critics assert, the state of the question will be materially altered.

The most ancient writer, who has mentioned Barnabas, as author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, is Tertulian: and this Latin father speaks, not in dubious terms, but agreeably to his usual manner in a decisive tone. In his treatise entitled, *De Pudicitia*, c. 20. he quotes the Epistle to the Hebrews in support of the Montanistic doctrine, that they who had fallen after baptism could not again expect remission of their sins. He quotes it however not as scripture, in the strictest sense of the word, but as a work of deuterocanonical authority, and as affording only collateral proof\*. His words

\* Most of the Latin fathers considered the Epistle to the Hebrews in the same light.



words are as follow. Volo ex abundantia alicujus comitis apostolorum testimonium superinducere, idoneum confirmandi de proximo jure disciplinam magistrorum. Extat enim et Barnabæ titulus ad Hebræos<sup>t</sup>, adeo satis auctoritatis viri, ut quem Paulus juxta se posuerit in abstinentiæ tenore, ‘aut ego solus et Barnabas non habemus hoc operandi potestatem<sup>u</sup>.’ Et utique receptior apud ecclesias Epistola Barnabæ<sup>w</sup> illo apocrypho Pastore mæchorum. Monens igitur discipulos, omiſſis omnibus initiis, ad perfectionem magis tendere, nec rursus fundamenta pœnitentiæ jacere operibus mortuorum: impossibile enim est, inquit, illos, qui semel inluminati sunt, et donum cœleste gustaverunt, et participarunt spiritum sanctum, et verbum Dei dulce gustarunt, occidente jam ævo, cum exciderint rursus revocari in pœnitentiam, reſigentes cruci in ſemetiſſis filium Dei et dedecorantes. This opinion of Tertullian, that Barnabas was the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, must have been entertained in the following centuries by many members of the Latin church, though it does appear to have been adopted by the Greek writers. For Jerom in his Epistle to Dardanus<sup>x</sup> ſays: Noſtris dicendum eſt, hanc epistolam quæ inſcribitur ‘ad Hebræos,’ non ſolum ab eccleſiis Orientis, ſed ab omnibus<sup>y</sup> retro eccleſiaſticis Græci ſermonis ſcriptoribus quaſi Pauli apoſtoli ſuſcipi, licet *plerique*<sup>z</sup> eam vel Barnabæ vel Clementis arbitrentur<sup>a</sup>.

But

<sup>t</sup> That is, the Epistle with the title, ‘ad Hebræos.’

<sup>u</sup> 1 Cor. ix. 16.

<sup>w</sup> Here Tertullian means the Epistle of Barnabas, commonly ſo called. We ſee likewiſe from this paſſage, that the Epistle aſcribed to Barnabas was greatly preferred by the African churches to the Shepherd of Hermas.

<sup>x</sup> Tom. II. p. 608.

<sup>y</sup> Jerom ſhould not have ſaid ‘omnibus,’ for Origen at leaſt makes an exception. See Sect. 15. of this chapter.

<sup>z</sup> *Plerique* applies here to the members of the Latin church only, who are oppoſed to thoſe of the Greek church mentioned in the former part of the ſentence.

<sup>a</sup> Lardner in his Credibility of the Goſpel Hiſtory, P. II. Vol. x. p. 123, 124. expreſſes a doubt, whether they whò aſcribed the Epistle

But how great so ever the number may have been among the members of the Latin church, who ascribed this Epistle to Barnabas, their assertions can be received only as private opinion, not as historical evidence, because the report is wholly unknown to the most ancient Greek fathers. Neither Tertullian, nor Jerom has advanced any argument in its support, and therefore it is difficult at present to assign the cause, which gave it birth. It is however not improbable, that the opinion took its rise in the following manner. Though the Epistle to the Hebrews was not received as a work of St. Paul, on account of the difference of its style, it was still held, as it justly deserves, in veneration, Clement of Rome, for instance, having quoted from it whole passages. But of a work, which we esteem, we always endeavour to discover the author, and if we cannot obtain certainty we have recourse to conjecture, and often assign to an anonymous work a name, which we think it deserves. Now between the Epistle to the Hebrews, and that which is called the Epistle of Barnabas<sup>b</sup>, notwithstanding their dissimilarity in other respects, there is a resemblance in the selection of the materials, and sometimes in the choice of the words. The two Epistles agree likewise in this respect, that the author neither of the one, nor of the other, has mentioned his name at the beginning<sup>c</sup>, though it was usual in Greek Epistles. Further, both of them abound with explanations

to Barnabas, or to Clement, did not mean, that these were only the scribes, who wrote what St. Paul dictated. But I cannot suppose that this was their meaning. In the whole Epistle there is no salutation either from Barnabas, or from Clement: we have no reason to suppose that Barnabas was with St. Paul when he was released from imprisonment: and, as Barnabas was not only the colleague of St. Paul, but likewise greatly his senior, it is not probable that Barnabas was employed merely as an amanuensis.

<sup>b</sup> I here leave the question undecided, whether this Epistle be genuine or not.

<sup>c</sup> The Latin translation of the Epistle of Barnabas (for the two first chapters of the Greek are lost) begins thus, *Avete filii et filie in nomine domini nostri Jesu Christi.*

tions of passages from the Old Testament. It is therefore not at all extraordinary that both of these anonymous Epistles have been ascribed to the same author.

Yet notwithstanding these Epistles in some respects agree, a more minute comparison of them will shew that they cannot well have been written by the same author. As Barnabas however may still have written the one, if he did not write the other, we must previously examine, whether the Epistle, which is commonly called the Epistle of Barnabas, be genuine. Eusebius refers it to the class of spurious writings<sup>d</sup>: and I am inclined to accede to this opinion, though I will not decide on the subject, because this would require an examination of all the arguments on both sides of the question. My chief reason for thinking that Barnabas was not the author of the Epistle, which goes under his name, is, not that it contains some very extraordinary interpretations of the Old Testament, though even these are in my opinion unworthy of Barnabas, but that it contains a passage, which betrays such ignorance in regard to the Hebrew letters, as can hardly be expected from a Jewish teacher of Christianity, who had long resided in Jerusalem. Surely Barnabas must have known that Jesus was written in Hebrew יֵשׁוּעַ, with י, and not ת, and that ת (which in some Alphabets has the shape of the cross) denoted, as a numeral, not 300, but 400. Yet there is a passage in this Epistle, which betrays an ignorance in both these respects<sup>e</sup>.

But

<sup>d</sup> Νοθα. Hist. Eccles. Lib. III. 25.

<sup>e</sup> The passage, which I mean is in § 7. where the author, speaking of the three hundred and eighteen servants of Abraham, says that the number 318 denotes Jesus and the Cross. This he makes out in the following manner. Μαθετε της δεκαοκτω πρωτης, ειτα της τριακοσις. Των γαρ δεκα και οκτω, Ιωτα δεκα, Ητα οκτω. Εχεις Ιησυν. Οτι δε σαιρος εν τω Τ εμελλεν εχειν την χαριν, λεγει και της τριακοσις. Δηλοι εν τον μεν Ιησυν εν τοις δυσι γεγραμμασι, και εν εινι τον σαιρον. These words I translate thus. 'Note first the 18, and then the 300. Of the 18, Jod is 10, and Heth is 8. Thus you have Jesus. And because the cross in the Tau was to obtain grace, he says also 300. It is evident therefore, that Jesus is denoted in two letters and the cross in

But at present I will admit, for the sake of argument, that Barnabas was the author of the Epistle, which goes by his name, which appears to have been the opinion of those members of the Latin church, who asserted that he was likewise the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews. On this supposition a comparison of the two Epistles will shew, that Barnabas could not have written the Epistle to the Hebrews. For the style of the one is very different from that of the other, the Epistle to the Hebrews being written in more elegant language, than the Epistle of Barnabas, though they often agree in single expressions. This was not perceived by the Latin fathers, who were for the most part ignorant of Greek, or they would not have ascribed both Epistles to the same author. In substance the two Epistles differ from each other still more, than in their language; for, though they in some measure agree in the choice of the materials, as both of them explain many passages from the Old Testament, yet they disagree in the mode of treating those materials. Further, the strength of argumentation in the Epistle to the Hebrews, is greatly superior to that, which appears in the Epistle of Barnabas: and it is hardly credible, that the very same author, who displayed such closeness of reasoning in the fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth, ninth, and tenth chapters of the former, could

one.' I have interpreted this passage according to the Hebrew alphabet, and not according to the Greek, to which a Jewish writer, who lived at Jerusalem, and wrote about the time of the destruction of that city cannot be supposed to allude. By ΗΤΑ therefore he understood Heth, and alluded, not to the second letter in ΙΗΣΟΥΣ, but to the last letter in the Hebrew word for Jesus, which he supposed was written not יֵשׁוּעַ, but יֵשׁוּה, confounding ה and ע, which was frequently done by the Samaritans and Galileans, because they pronounced both letters in the same manner. Again his Tau is for the same reason, not Greek but likewise oriental. It is true, that in the common Hebrew alphabet Tau is written ת, which is not in the shape of a cross: but in the Phœnician and Samaritan alphabets Tau has the shape of a cross. Now this Tau he says denotes 300, whereas every one, who has learnt only the first rudiments of Hebrew, knows that Tau, as a numeral denotes 400.—Now two such glaring mistakes as these cannot possibly be ascribed to Barnabas, however weak his understanding may have been, and however absurdly he may have reasoned on other occasions.



could use such weak and trifling arguments as occur throughout the latter. It is true that, if the first chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews proves, according to the common interpretation of it, Christ's superiority to the angels from his divinity, and his divinity from passages of the Old Testament, which have no relation to it : if in the second chapter the eighth psalm is really quoted as a prophecy of Christ : if further the inaccuracy of those passages, in which I suspect that the translator has made mistakes<sup>f</sup>, are to be ascribed, not to the translator, but to the author, the Epistle to the Hebrews has likewise its weak parts. But whether the author be in fault, or not, these passages are of a very different kind from the weak parts of the Epistle of Barnabas. This difference the Latin fathers in general were unable to perceive : for the Old Testament, which is quoted and explained in both Epistles, they read not in the Hebrew, but (namely before the time of Jerom) in a wretched Latin translation of the Septuagint Greek version.

On the other hand, if it be granted, that Barnabas was not the author of the Epistle, which goes by his name, the argument deduced from the dissimilarity of the style and the contents of the two Epistles will cease to operate. The question therefore is ; even on this ground, have we any reason to believe that Barnabas wrote the Epistle to the Hebrews ? I think not ; for, if he did, he wrote better Greek, and arranged his materials more clearly and methodically than St. Paul, an opinion which is not very consistent with Acts xiv. 12. where St. Paul, then in company with Barnabas, is described as being the chief speaker. However, I think it unnecessary to argue any further on this ground, because it was not occupied by the Latin fathers, who at the same time, that they ascribed to Barnabas the Epistle to the Hebrews, believed him likewise to be the author of that, which commonly goes by his name.

<sup>f</sup> See Sect. 13. of this chapter.

## S E C T. XVIII.

*Of the canonical authority of the Epistle to the Hebrews.*

**I** NOW come to the very important inquiry, whether the Epistle to the Hebrews, under these circumstances, ought to be received as an infallible rule of faith, and placed among the canonical books of the New Testament. That the ancients thought differently on this subject, some allowing it to be canonical, others not, appears from what has been said in the preceding sections. But before we can determine this question, we must first agree on a criterion, by which the canonical authority of a book is to be judged. Now according to the principle, which I laid in the chapter on Inspiration<sup>s</sup>, a canonical book of the New Testament is a book written by an Apostle. If then the Epistle to the Hebrews was written by the Apostle St. Paul, it is canonical. But if it was not written by an Apostle, it is not canonical; for, however excellent its contents may be, they alone will not oblige us to receive it, as a work inspired by the Deity.

In this light the fathers of the second and third centuries considered the Epistle to the Hebrews. Tertullian, though he highly approved of its contents, and found in them a support for his own severe opinions, quotes it only as collateral evidence, and clearly distinguishes it from the apostolic writings. Origin likewise doubted its canonical authority, for no other reason, than because he was not convinced that St. Paul was the author, and certainly not, because he had any objection to the doctrines, which it contains. This is evident from what he himself says a few lines before the words, which I have quoted in the 15th section: τα νοήματα της επισολης θαυμασια εσι, και ε δευτερα των αποστολικων ομολογεμενων γραμμάτων, και τετο αν συμφησαι ειναι αληθες πας ο προσεχων τη αναγνωσει τη αποστολικη. Nor, as far as I know, have any of the fathers grounded their doubts on the doctrines of  
this

<sup>s</sup> Vol. I. Ch. iii. Sect. 2, 3.

this Epistle, though there are some passages, for instance, ch. vi. 4, 5, 6. x. 26. which have been thought inconsistent with the benevolence of the Supreme Being. If they doubted of the truth of any of its doctrines, it was because they previously doubted whether the Epistle was canonical: and they did not argue, in an inverted order, from any supposed exceptionable passages to a want of canonical authority. Nor did Tertullian, though he highly approved of those very passages, which others have thought exceptionable, pronounce therefore in favour of its canonical authority. We see therefore that in the examination of the present question the doctrines contained in the Epistle did not influence the judgement of the fathers, either on the one side or on the other.

Jerom however has laid down a criterion of canonical authority, which is very different from that assumed by the fathers of the second and third centuries. For in his Letter to Dardanus, after having said that the Greek church received the Epistle to the Hebrews as St. Paul's, though most persons (namely in the Latin church) supposed it to have been the work either of Barnabas, or of Clement, adds immediately after the words, which I have quoted in the preceding section, 'et nihil interesse cujus sit, cum ecclesiastici viri sit, et quotidie ecclesiarum lectione celebretur.' But if nothing further can be said in favour of the Epistle to the Hebrews, than that it was written by a 'vir ecclesiasticus,' according to Jerom's expression, and read daily in the churches, we have a very unsatisfactory proof of its canonical authority, especially when Jerom himself leaves it in doubt, who this ecclesiastical author was. Is every ecclesiastical author, it may be asked, inspired: and are all writings inspired, which are read in the churches? The latter question Jerom himself has virtually answered in the negative: for according to his own account the Latin church denied, that the Epistle to the Hebrews was inspired, though it was read in the public service. If it could be determined, who this ecclesiastical author was, the question would be much more capable of a determinate answer. Now they, who have denied that St. Paul was the author, have ascribed it  
either



either to St. Luke, or to Barnabas, or to Clement of Rome. Were St. Luke the author, which however is wholly impossible on account of the difference of style, the Epistle to the Hebrews would be on a level with St. Luke's Gospel and the Acts of the Apostles, on the inspiration of which I have expressed some doubts in the first volume of this Introduction<sup>h</sup>. Were it written by Barnabas, who was St. Paul's oldest colleague, it might have on this account a better claim to inspiration, than the writings of St. Luke. But on the other hand, if the Epistle of Barnabas, commonly so called, be genuine, the two Epistles, as proceeding from the same author, will be reduced, in point of authority, to a level, and no man can possibly consider the Epistle of Barnabas, as an infallible rule of faith. Lastly, were Clement the author, it would be no more canonical, than the other writings of Clement. Such are the answers, which might be given, if St. Luke, or Barnabas, or Clement were fixed on as the author of this Epistle. But when the author is left undetermined, and it is said only in general terms to have been written by an ecclesiastical author, how are we to prove that the Epistle was inspired?

If we appeal to the testimony of the ancient church, in order to determine the divine authority of this Epistle, we shall be again left in a state of uncertainty, for on this head the church was at variance with itself. The most ancient Latin or Western church did not rank it among the canonical writings, though the Epistle was well known to them, for Clement of Rome has quoted from it many passages. It is true, that some Latin writers in the fourth century received it, among whom was Jerom himself: yet even in the time of Jerom the Latin church had not placed it among the canonical writings, as appears from various passages in the works of Jerom. In his Letter to Dardanus, immediately after the words quoted in the preceding paragraph, he adds: *quod si eam Latinorum consuetudo non recipit inter scripturas*

<sup>h</sup> Ch. iii. Sect. 3.



scripturas canonicas, nec Græcorum quidem ecclesiæ Apocalypsin Johannis eadem libertate recipiunt nos<sup>1</sup> tamen utramque suscipimus, nequaquam hujus temporis consuetudinem, sed veterum scriptorem auctoritatem sequentes, qui plerumque utriusque abutuntur testimoniis, non ut interdum de apocryphis facere solent, quippe qui et gentilium literarum raro utuntur exemplis, sed quasi canonicis et ecclesiasticis. Here is a clear confession of the fact, that the Latin church did not receive the Epistle as canonical, though the argument, which Jerom uses in favour of its canonical authority is a false one. Again in his Commentary on the eighth chapter of Isaiah<sup>k</sup>, he says, Cæterum beatus Apostolus in Epistola ad Hebræos (licet eam Latina consuetudo inter canonicas scripturas non recipiat) docet, &c. And in his Note<sup>l</sup> to Zechar. xviii. 14, he says, De hoc monte, et de hac civitate et Apostolus Paulus (si tamen in suscipienda epistola Græcorum auctoritatem Latina lingua non respuit) sacrata oratione disputans, ait. After Jerom's time, the number of those, who received the Epistle as canonical, gradually increased, and at length its canonical authority ceased, in the Latin church, to be a matter of doubt.

In the Syrian church the Epistle to the Hebrews is received (and, as far as we know, without exception) as canonical. But I have shewn in the second volume of this Introduction, ch. vii. Sect. 2. that the Epistle to the Hebrews in the Syriac version was not translated by the person, who translated the other books of the New Testament. In the oldest Syrian canon therefore the Epistle to the Hebrews was not admitted: but it was afterwards admitted into the canon, and as it appears, in a very short time.

We see then that in the early ages of Christianity the Epistle to the Hebrews was received as canonical by some churches, while other churches did not reckon it among the canonical writings. Whether we ought to receive it as such, depends, according to the criterion laid down in the beginning of this section, on the previous

<sup>1</sup> Namely, I Jerom.<sup>k</sup> Tom. III. p. 80.<sup>l</sup> Ib. p. 1744.

ous question, whether it was written by an Apostle. But we have already seen that this previous question cannot, at least not with certainty, be answered in the affirmative: consequently, the canonical authority of the Epistle is uncertain. The severe doctrines, which are contained in ch. vi. 4, 5, 6, x. 26, 28. have by many been thought exceptionable: but, for my own part, I think them capable of a satisfactory explanation. However, if in ch. ii. 6—9. a passage from the eighth Psalm is applied to Christ, and in ch. xii. 26, 27. a passage from the prophet Haggai is applied to the end of the world, and any man is persuaded that these passages have really no such reference, he need not ask any further questions about the inspiration of the Epistle. In my Commentary, I have endeavoured, as far as lay in my power, to rescue the passages, to which objections have been made. I will not assert, that I have every where met with success: and it is therefore possible, that in the Notes, which I intend to publish to my translation of the New Testament, I shall give up points, which I formerly defended, and acknowledge perhaps, that the author was sometimes inaccurate,

*What a bog of shallowness & conceit*

## S E C T. XIX.

### *Of the contents of the Epistle to the Hebrews.*

**T**HE contents of this Epistle I have represented at large in my Commentary on it; at present therefore I shall only give a short sketch of them.

In the first place, the author endeavours to answer objections, which the Jews had made to the Christian religion, and which had occasioned the Jewish proselytes to waver in the faith. He then points out the impending abolition of the Levitical law, and its inefficacy even to

the Jews: which subject is treated in a more clear and comprehensive manner, than in any other book of the New Testament. The chief arguments are taken from Psalm cx. which relates to the Priest after the order of Melchisedek<sup>m</sup>, and from the prophecy of Jeremiah relative to a New Covenant. These arguments are produced in the seventh and eighth chapters, but the subject is still continued in the following chapters.

Here it may be remarked, that St. Paul, though he never permitted the Levitical law to be imposed on the heathen converts to Christianity, and undoubtedly considered it as unnecessary, still permitted the Jews to continue the exercise of it: he likewise observed it himself, and in order to convince the Jews that he did not preach apostacy from the law, he made a Nazarite vow, and accompanied it with the necessary offerings at Jerusalem<sup>n</sup>. The open declaration therefore made in the Epistle to the Hebrews, relative to the abolition of the Levitical law, is to be ascribed, perhaps to the circumstance, that it was written not long before the destruction of the temple, when the Jewish sacrifices ceased.

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## CH A P. XXV.

### GENERAL REMARKS ON THE CATHOLIC EPISTLES.

**T**HE Epistle of St. James, the two Epistles of St. Peter, the first Epistle of St. John, and the Epistle of St. Jude, were not addressed to any one person, or to any one community in particular: hence they acquired the title of catholic, or general Epistles. The second  
and

<sup>m</sup> Or, of the sanctuary of Melchisedek.

<sup>n</sup> Acts xviii. 18. 21, 22. xx. 20—26. xxiv. 17, 18.

and third Epistles of St. John do not come under this description: but they were annexed to St. John's first Epistle, partly because they proceeded from the same author, and partly because, as they are very short, they would have been in danger of being lost, if written by themselves.

The term 'Catholic' was applied to those Epistles in a very early age, for Eusebius uses it as the common appellation of them in the fourth century. But in the sixth century the Latin writers began to apply to them the appellation of 'canonical,' of which the first instance occurs in the writings of Cassiodorus. Some critics have supposed that the Latin writers in the sixth and following centuries confounded the words 'catholicus' and 'canonicus,' and that the former was exchanged for the latter, through mere ignorance. But I would rather ascribe the origin of the term 'canonicus' to the circumstance, that the authenticity of five out of the seven was formerly doubted, and that the first Epistle of St. Peter and the first Epistle of St. John were the only two, which the ancient church considered as of undoubted authority. Hence the appellation of 'canonical' was at first perhaps given to those two Epistles only, in order to distinguish them from the other five. But as the doubts gradually subsided, and these five were written in the same manuscripts with the other two, the title, which at first was a mark of distinction for these two alone, became at last the common appellation of them all. Nay, it is not impossible that the term 'Catholic,' as applied to these Epistles, owes its origin to a similar cause, and that it was used at first to denote the universality of their reception: in the same manner, as Ebedjesu in his enumeration of the books, which form the Syrian canon, says of the Epistle of St. James, the first of St. Peter, and the first of St. John, that they were acknowledged in all books, and in all languages<sup>o</sup>.

Eusebius in his catalogue of the writings of the New Testament<sup>p</sup>, has placed only the first Epistle of St. Peter, and

<sup>o</sup> Assemani Bib. Orient. Tom. III. P. I. p. 9.

<sup>p</sup> Hist. Eccles. Lib. III. 23.



and the first Epistle of St. John, among the *ὁμολογούμενα*, or books universally received by the Christian church. The other five he has placed among the *αντιλεγόμενα*, or books which were not universally received. However the Epistle of St. James was admitted by the greatest part of those who rejected the remaining four. Whether they who rejected these Epistles had good reason for so doing, will be considered in the proper places.

## C H A P. XXVI.

## OF THE EPISTLE OF ST. JAMES.

## S E C T. I.

*Previous observations, relative to the James, who was called the brother of Jesus.*

**B**EFORE we examine by what James this Epistle was written, it will be necessary to premise a few observations relative to that James, who was called the brother of Jesus: for without these observations it will be difficult to state the principal question with precision.

St. John<sup>a</sup> and St. Mark<sup>r</sup> have spoken in general terms of brethren of Christ, some of whom did not believe in him, at least not during his life time. St. Matthew<sup>s</sup> has mentioned four by name, James, Josès, Simon, and Judas<sup>t</sup>: and he has likewise spoken of sisters of Jesus, who appear to have been more numerous, than they, who are called his brothers. Now the words of St. Matthew, where he speaks of these four persons, are capable

<sup>a</sup> Ch. vii. 3—8.<sup>r</sup> Ch. iii. 21. 31—35.<sup>s</sup> Ch. xiii. 55. See also Mark vi. 3.<sup>t</sup> As Judas is likewise mentioned as brother of Jesus, the inquiry instituted in this section applies to the Epistle of St. Jude, as well as to the Epistle of St. James.

capable of a two-fold interpretation : and the decision of our present question will in some measure depend upon that, which we adopt. Namely, St. Matthew's words may be rendered either,

‘ Are not his brothers called James, Joses, Simon, and Judas : and are not all his sisters with us ?’

Or they may be rendered,

‘ Are not his brothers, James, Joses, Simon, and Judas, and all his sisters with us ?’

If we adopt the latter interpretation, it follows, that these four brothers of Jesus were then at Nazareth : but if they were at Nazareth, they could not have been in the number of those, who attended Christ on his journies. Consequently, not one of them could have been an Apostle : and they come under the description, which St. John<sup>u</sup> has given of Christ's brothers, in whose company Christ refused to go to Jerusalem.

Now, as James and Judas are here mentioned as brothers of Christ, and we have two Epistles ascribed to authors, who bear these names, the first question, which occurs is, Are they the authors of these Epistles ? But before this question is answered, we must previously examine, in what sense James and Judas, with Joses and Simon, were called brothers of Christ. On this subject there are five different opinions.

1. That they were the sons of Joseph, not by Mary the mother of Jesus, but by a former wife. This is a very ancient, and I believe the most ancient opinion : nor do I know any material objections which can be made to it. In this sense, James, Joses, Simon, and Judas were brothers-in-law of Jesus, and older than he. Now with this representation the accounts given of these four persons are perfectly consistent. For it might be expected, that they lived at Nazareth, and that they would assume to themselves a kind of authority over the actions of Jesus, out of concern for his safety, of which we meet with an instance in Mark iii. 21. 31—35. During his life, they might have disbelieved in him, and yet

<sup>u</sup> Ch. vii. 3—8.

yet have been convinced after his death and resurrection.

2. That they were the sons of Joseph by Mary the mother of Jesus<sup>w</sup>. In this sense they were own brothers of Jesus, but younger than he. It is true, that this opinion is not consistent with the notion formerly entertained of the supposed perpetual virginity. But this notion is wholly incapable of support: and, even if it had been possible for Joseph and Mary to have lived after their marriage in a state of perpetual continency, a life of this kind would not only have been inconsistent with sound reason, but, according to the precepts delivered by St. Paul in 1 Cor. vii. would have merited censure. On this ground therefore no objection can be made. But there are other reasons, which render this opinion improbable. For, if these four persons were the sons of Mary, and the sisters mentioned by St. Matthew were likewise her daughters, which we must suppose agreeably to this hypothesis, it cannot be imagined that she had lost all her children, when Jesus was crucified: for if all the rest were dead, which however is not probable, James and Judas were still alive. Yet from the account given by St. John, ch. xix. 26, 27. it seems as if Mary was without children, and without support: for Jesus recommends her to the care of St. John, and commands him to regard her as a mother, on which St. John takes her to his own house. On this account it is improbable that Mary, the mother of Jesus, was likewise the mother of James and Judas. I do not mean to assert, that Mary never had children by Joseph, for it appears from Matth. i. 25. that the contrary is probable: but, if she had, they must have died young, or at least have been no longer alive, when Christ was crucified.

If

<sup>w</sup> This opinion, which is by no means new, has been lately supported with great warmth by Herder in his 'Epistles of two brothers of Jesus in our Canon,' published in 1775. But Herder's arguments have been combated by Gabler, in a dissertation entitled, *De Jacobo epistolæ ei attributæ auctore*, published in 1787.

If either the one, or the other, of the two preceding opinions be true<sup>x</sup>, and James and Judas, the authors of the Epistles, were literally brothers of Christ<sup>y</sup>, it follows that they were not Apostles: for the elder Apostle James was the son of Zebedee, and the younger Apostle James and his brother Judas were sons of Alphæus. Nor do the titles, which the authors of these Epistles have given themselves, indicate that they were Apostles: for they call themselves, not Apostles of Jesus Christ, but servants of Jesus Christ. But if they were not Apostles, their writings can lay no claim to canonical authority. In respect to the Epistle of St. Jude, this inference is in some measure warranted by its contents, which are not of such a nature, as to imply divine inspiration. To the Epistle of St. James I have no objections to make, and I see nothing in the contents of it, which might form a bar to its canonical authority: but others have thought differently on this subject, and the ancients were very much divided about it, as will appear in one of the following sections.

3. A third opinion relative to James, Josès, Simon, and Judas, is, that they were sons of Joseph by the widow of a brother, who had died without children, and to whom therefore Joseph by the laws of Moses was obliged to raise issue. In this sense, James, Josès, Simon, and Judas would be again half-brothers of Jesus. But this opinion I think extremely improbable: for the law which obliged the Jews to take the widows of their brothers, who had died without children, affected those only who were single, and was not extended to those, who were already married<sup>z</sup>. Besides, as soon as one heir

<sup>x</sup> The former I think preferable, for the reasons already assigned.

<sup>y</sup> An objection however may be made from the circumstance, that in neither the Epistle of St. James, nor in that of St. Jude, has the author called himself brother of Jesus. In the former, the author calls himself James the servant of Jesus: and in the latter the author gives himself the same title, with the addition of 'brother of James,' whereas if he had been really brother of Jesus, he would probably have preferred this more distinguished appellation.

<sup>z</sup> See my Mosaic law, § 98.



heir was born of the brother's widow, all was done, which the law required : but according to this opinion Joseph had four sons, and several daughters by his brother's widow, and that too at a time, when his own wife was alive, by whom according to the same opinion he had no children.

4. The preceding opinion may be delivered, with some alteration, in the following manner : that Joseph's deceased brother, to whom the laws required, that he should raise issue, was Alphæus. In this case, James and Judas who are called brothers of Jesus, will be the same as the Apostles James and Judas, who are called sons of Alphæus, Matth. x. 3. But, if this representation be true, Alphæus cannot be the same person with Clopas, as is frequently supposed : for Clopas had in marriage the sister of Joseph's wife.

5. According to the fifth opinion, which was first advanced by Jerom, and has been very generally received, James, Joseph, Simon, and Judas, were brothers of Christ, not in the strict sense of the word 'brother,' but in a more lax sense, namely, in that of cousin, or relation in general, agreeably to the usage of this word in the Hebrew language. And the relationship of these four persons to Jesus is derived according to this opinion, not from the side of Joseph, but from that of Mary, and in the following manner. James and Judas are the same as the Apostles, James and Judas, who were sons of Alphæus : consequently, Alphæus was the father also of Simon and Josès. Further, Alphæus is the same person with Clopas<sup>a</sup>, for the Hebrew name חִלְפִּי may be expressed in Greek either by *Αλφαιος* or by *Κλωπας*. Now Clopas married the sister of Christ's mother, who was likewise called Mary<sup>b</sup> : consequently, the sons of Clopas were first cousins of Jesus, and

<sup>a</sup> Not Cleopas, for the Greek name is *Κλωπας*. St. Luke ch. xxiv. 18. speaks of a Cleopas (*Κλεοπας*), but he appears to be a different person, *Κλεοπας* being a contraction for *Κλεοπατρος*.

<sup>b</sup> See John xix. 25. Matth. 56. Mark xv. 40.

and in this extended sense of the word *αδελφος* are James, Joses, Simon, and Judas called *αδελφοι τῶ Ιησοῦ*.

Now this opinion, to which I formerly subscribed, appears to me at present less probable: for it depends entirely on the question, whether *Αλφαιος* and *Κλωπας* are only two different names of one and the same person called in Hebrew *יֵשׁוּעַ*, which is possible and nothing more. Appeal indeed is made to Gal. i. 19. where St. Paul says, *ἑτερον δὲ τῶν ἀποστόλων οὐκ εἶδον, εἰ μὴ Ἰακώβον, τὸν ἀδελφὸν τῶ Κυρίου*, which seems to imply, that James, who was called the brother of the Lord, was one of the twelve Apostles. But this is not a necessary inference; for St. Paul might intend only to say, that he had seen no other Apostle than St. Peter, whom he had just mentioned, but that he saw James the brother of the Lord. Further, there is a difficulty attending the circumstance, that Joseph and Clopas married two sisters, each of which was called Mary. It is very unusual for two sisters to have the same name, except where, in addition to the name, which they have in common, they have each of them another name: but in this case it is usual to denote them, not by their common, but by their particular names. I think it therefore probable that Mary, the wife of Clopas, was not properly the sister of Mary, the wife of Joseph, but only her cousin, or relation.

Of the five opinions, which I have thus enumerated, there are only two, which, in my opinion, are at all probable; and these are the first, and the last. Which of these two ought to be preferred, I will not undertake to determine. I was formerly attached to the latter, because I had been taught from my youth that it was the true one, and had heard it supported by very specious arguments. But the more I have examined it, the more I have doubted of its truth: and at present it appears to me less probable, than the first opinion. I shall leave the question however undetermined, and argue in the following sections hypothetically.

## S E C T. II.

*Whether the author of this Epistle was an Apostle; and if he was, whether he was the elder or the younger Apostle James.*

**I**F it be granted, that the author of this Epistle was an Apostle, notwithstanding he has not assumed this title, and it be admitted at the same time, that James, the brother, or cousin of Christ, was one of the twelve Apostles, the question to be asked is, which of the Apostles was the author, since there were two Apostles called James? The one, who was called the elder James, was son of Zebedee, and brother of John<sup>c</sup>; he was one of the three Apostles, in whom Christ placed the greatest confidence, who alone were witnesses to the raising of Jairus's daughter from the dead, to the transfiguration of Christ on the mount, and to his agony in the garden. He likewise suffered martyrdom not many years after the death of Christ. The other Apostle James was the son of Alphæus<sup>d</sup>; and this is the James, to whom they, who adopt the fifth opinion mentioned in the preceding section, ascribe the Epistle in question.

There are very ancient traditionary reports, which attribute the Epistle to the elder James, the son of Zebedee. In the Codex Corbeiensis, the manuscript of the old Latin version, published by Martianay and Sabatier, the subscription to this Epistle is, 'Explicit epistola Jacobi, filii Zebedæi.' In the Syriac version, into which the Epistle of St. James, the first of St. Peter, and the first of St. John, have alone been admitted as canonical, these three Epistles have the following

<sup>c</sup> Matth. x. 2. Mark i. 19. iii. 17. Luke v. 10.

<sup>d</sup> Matth. x. 3.





The authorities (if subscriptions deserve the name) which I have quoted in the beginning of the preceding paragraph, in favour of the opinion, that the elder James, the son of Zebedee, was the author of our Epistle, I have alleged, not with a view of prepossessing the reader in its favour, but merely to shew what the ancients have thought on this subject. However, I do not agree with many modern writers, who think, that the opinion is absurd. For this reason Lardner considered it as unworthy of a confutation: but Benson, who likewise rejected the opinion, did not think it so contemptible, for he has brought the following arguments against it, to each of which I will make a reply.

1. 'James the elder was beheaded about the year 43 or 44. If therefore he was the author of our Epistle, it must have been the first written of all the apostolic Epistles. But this is not probable, because it was the usual practice of the Apostles, first to preach the Gospel verbally, then to pay one or more visits to the Christian communities, and last of all to write to them.'

Answer. If we admit, that St. Paul followed this rule, from whose Epistles Dr. Benson appears to have derived it, it is no necessary consequence, that other Apostles observed it, and that none of them wrote an Epistle to a Christian community, in which he had not verbally taught, or to which he had not already paid one or more visits: for if an Apostle was prevented from going in person, this very circumstance might induce him to communicate instructions by letter. But this rule is not true, even when applied to St. Paul. For he wrote to the Romans and Colossians, before he had ever seen them: and the Epistles to the Galatians and the Thessalonians were written almost immediately after their conversion, or at least as soon as we may suppose, that the elder James wrote, after the conversion of another community.

2. ' Before the death of the elder James, the preaching of the Gospel was chiefly confined within the limits of Palestine: but our Epistle was written to Christians of the dispersion, that is, to Christians out of Palestine.'

Answer. That the Gospel was not preached without the limits of Palestine before the death of the elder James, is a position, which is grounded only on the silence of the Acts of the Apostles. But this inference is hardly defensible: for it was not St. Luke's object to give a complete history of all the transactions, which took place in the Christian church<sup>f</sup>, and therefore his silence in respect to the propagation of Christianity out of Palestine within the first ten years after the crucifixion, will not warrant the inference, that it was preached during this interval in Palestine alone. On the contrary, there is reason to believe, that it actually was propagated in distant countries within a very few years after the death of Christ. For not to mention, that St. Paul preached the Gospel in Arabia, and that the eunuch of Candace, queen of Ethiopia, was baptized by Philip, on which I will not insist, because into neither of these countries would a Greek Epistle have been sent, there were Jews present at Jerusalem from Cappadocia, Pontus, Asia, Phrygia, Pamphylia, Egypt, Cyrene, and Rome, when the gifts of the Holy Ghost were first communicated to the Apostles on the day of Pentecost, and they acknowledged the wonderful powers, which the Apostles had received<sup>g</sup>. Now it cannot be supposed, that these persons neglected, on their return to their own countries, to make known the Christian religion: and we know, that in Alexandria, and in Rome, there were Christians before any Apostle came thither. At Damascus there were likewise Christians<sup>h</sup>, though perhaps they did not speak Greek: but

<sup>f</sup> See what was said on this subject, Ch. viii. Sect. 2.

<sup>g</sup> Acts ii. 5—11.

<sup>h</sup> Acts ix.

but Tarsus, where Greek was spoken, had been visited by St. Paul, between the time of his conversion and the death of the elder James<sup>1</sup>; and St. Paul hardly spent his time there without making converts. Christians from Cyprus and Cyrene were already become preachers of the Gospel, and by their means a very flourishing community had been established at Antioch, which attracted the particular notice of the Apostles at Jerusalem<sup>k</sup>. There was a sufficient number of Jewish converts to Christianity out of Palestine before the death of the elder James, to occasion an Epistle addressed to 'the twelve tribes, which are scattered abroad.' Nay, the communities in Antioch and its neighbourhood were alone almost sufficient to have occasioned such an Epistle.

3. 'Among the Jewish converts, to whom the Epistle of St. James was addressed, there prevailed a great corruption of morals, and of doctrines, especially in the article of Justification, which arose from a perversion of the precepts delivered by St. Paul on this subject. Now the perversion of a doctrine, which is in itself clear and intelligible, seldom takes place, till some time has elapsed after the first delivery of that doctrine, and till it has gone through a great variety of hands. Consequently, an Epistle, like that of St. James, in which the false notions, which prevailed in regard to Justification, are corrected, could not have been written so early, as during the life of the elder James.'

Answer. This argument is founded on a mistake: for the Justification, of which the author of our Epistle speaks, is a very different kind of Justification from that of which St. Paul speaks. It is the old Jewish doctrine of Justification, and not a misunderstood doctrine of St. Paul, which the author of this Epistle combats<sup>l</sup>: consequently, the argument deduced  
from

<sup>1</sup> Acts ix. 30.

<sup>k</sup> Acts xi. 20—30.

<sup>l</sup> This will be fully proved in the sixth section of this chapter.

from it in regard to the time, when the Epistle was written, falls at once to the ground. And as to the sins, against which the author of this Epistle warns, they were such, as were common among the Jews, and were brought by the Jewish converts into the Christian church; for we must not imagine, that the first Christian communities consisted wholly of members, who were in a state of perfect regeneration.

Further, this argument not only proves, that the Epistle of St. James was written at a late period, but may really be applied to prove the very reverse. The author of our Epistle combats the Jewish notion, that they would be justified or saved merely by their faith in the one supreme God<sup>m</sup>. Hence, it may be inferred, that St. Paul had not yet preached in those communities, to which this Epistle was addressed, and that his tropus pædiæ was not known to them: for if it were, our author would probably have avoided the apparent contradiction, which necessarily arises from his having used the term Justification in a different sense from that, which St. Paul ascribed to it. Besides, if St. Paul had already taught in those communities, to which the Epistle of St. James was addressed, it is probable, that they would have been better instructed, than from this Epistle they appear to have been. On these accounts therefore I am really inclined to ascribe a very early date to this Epistle.

4. 'In ch. v. 8. the coming of the Lord to judge Jerusalem is represented as being near at hand: consequently, the Epistle could not have been written by a person, who was beheaded not less than seven-and-twenty years before the destruction of Jerusalem.

Answer. Without entering into the question, whether allusion is made in James v. 8. to the destruction of Jerusalem, which however is a matter of doubt, I will only observe, that the terms, 'near,' and 'distant,' are merely relative, and may denote a greater or smaller portion of time, according to the rule or measure,

<sup>m</sup> See the sixth section of this chapter,



sure, by which they are estimated. More than twenty-seven years must elapse before the present century expires<sup>n</sup>: and yet, if I expected that a great revolution would take place in Europe before the close of this century, I might, without impropriety, describe it as not far distant. In short, the destruction of a state, which has lasted many centuries, may be said to be near at hand, if it shall happen within the present generation, and the half of those, who are now alive, survive it. This argument therefore is indecisive.

All things considered then, I see no ground for the assertion, that the elder James was not the author of this Epistle: though on the other hand, I will not positively affirm, that he was. One circumstance however affords at least a presumptive argument in favour of the opinion, that it was really written by the elder James, and at a time when the Gospel had not been propagated among the Gentiles: namely, that it contains no exhortations to harmony between the Jewish and Gentile converts, which, after the time that the Gentiles were admitted into the church, became absolutely necessary. Had it been written after the apostolic council at Jerusalem, mentioned in the 15th chapter of the Acts, and by the younger James, we might have expected that at least some allusion would be made in it to the decree of this council, which was propounded by the younger James in favour of the Gentile converts, and that the Epistle would contain an admonition to the Jewish converts, to consider the Gentile converts as their brethren. On a second consideration however I perceive that this argument applies rather to the time, when the Epistle was written, than to the author of it: for the younger James might have written it as early, as it is supposed that the elder James wrote it, and either of the suppositions will account for the circumstance, that the Epistle contains no exhortations to harmony between the Jews and Gentiles.

To

To the argument, which I have here used in favour of an early date, may be opposed another argument in favour of a late date, and consequently in favour of the opinion, that the Epistle was not written by the elder James. Namely, it may be said, that if this Epistle had been written before the apostolic council at Jerusalem was held, it would hardly have remained unknown to St. Paul. But if St. Paul had seen this Epistle, he would have probably used such terms in his Epistles to the Romans and Galatians, as would have prevented all appearance of contradiction between this Epistle and his own writings. I mention this as an argument, which may be produced on the present question, though I by no means think it a decisive one.

After all then I must confess my uncertainty, and must leave the question undecided,

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### S E C T. III.

*Whether the author of this Epistle was St. James, called the brother of Jesus.*

**I**N the first section of this chapter, where I have enumerated the five different opinions relative to James, Joses, Simon, and Judas, who are called brothers of Jesus, Matth. xiii. 55. I have shewn, that the most ancient opinion is, that they were sons of Joseph by a former wife, and brothers in law of Christ. Now there is no improbability in the supposition, that a brother in law of Christ wrote the Epistle in question: and that this was a very common opinion in the four first centuries, appears from what Jerom has said in his Catalogue

Catalogue of Ecclesiastical Writers\*, though Jerom himself did not subscribe to it.

The Epistle itself however contains nothing, which warrants the inference, that the author of it was a brother of Christ, for the author calls himself only 'the servant of Christ:' and St. Jude, though he expressly calls himself 'brother of James, names himself in like manner 'servant,' and not 'brother of Christ.' Hence it may be objected, that if the James and the Jude, who wrote these Epistles, had been brothers as well as servants of Christ, they would not have assumed merely the latter title: for the appellation of 'brother and servant of Christ, would not only have been more honourable, but more characteristic, and would more easily have distinguished them from other disciples of the same name, than the bare appellation of 'servant.' Now if the expression 'brother of Christ,' as applied to James, Joses, Simon and Judas, Matth. xiii. 55. be explained, according to the second opinion delivered in the first section of this chapter, as denoting, that they were the sons of Joseph and Mary, I think that the objection is hardly capable of an answer: for in that case, since the mother of Christ, was likewise their mother, the appellation of 'brother of Christ' was due to them in the strictest sense. But the objection will lose its force, if we adopt the first opinion, namely, that these four persons were sons of Joseph, not by Mary, but by a former wife. For in this case, though their father Joseph was the reputed father of Christ, and he is named as such in Christ's genealogy, yet if James and Jude believed in Mary's supernatural conception of Christ, they must have been conscious to themselves, that they were really not his brothers, and therefore that they could not without impropriety assume the title.

James, called the brother of Christ, had likewise the appellation of James the Just, and stood in very high reputation among the Jews. This is confirmed by a

passage

\* Tom. IV. P. ii. p. 101. ed Benedict.

passage of Josephus<sup>p</sup>, which I shall presently quote. Further, he is said to have been bishop of Jerusalem : and (if we distinguish James the brother of Jesus from the Apostle James) he is that important person, by whose opinion the Apostolic council at Jerusalem, described Acts xv. 13—29. abided, who again appears as a principal person in the church of Jerusalem, Acts xxi. 18—26. He is likewise mentioned by St. Paul, 1 Cor. xv. 7. Gal. i. 19. ii. 9. 12. : among which passages, Gal. ii. 9. deserves particularly to be noticed, because he is not only there called one of the pillars of the church, but is ranked even before St. Peter, on account of his great authority in Jerusalem. He every where appears as the friend of St. Paul, with whose sentiments his own coincide. At the same time he was extremely cautious not to give offence to the Jews, on whose account he proposed, that the heathen converts should be admonished to abstain from blood and from meats offered to idols ; which doctrine St. Paul not only adopted and delivered to the church of Antioch, by virtue of the apostolic decree, but likewise recommended and explained in his Epistles, especially Rom. xiv. 1 Cor. viii. x. Now the contents of the Epistle of St. James are such as might be expected from a writer of this description ; and if he was the author, we have an additional argument, in favour of the opinion, that it contains nothing contradictory to St. Paul's doctrines<sup>q</sup>.

Though it would be foreign to the present purpose to collect all the circumstances, which have been recorded of St. James, called the brother of Christ, yet I think it necessary to quote two passages concerning him, the one from the work of Josephus, the other from the works of Hegesippus, who lived in the time  
of

<sup>p</sup> Namely, if the James, of whom Josephus speaks, be the same person as James, the brother of Christ, and not the younger Apostle James, according to the fifth opinion.

<sup>q</sup> See the sixth section of this chapter.



of Hadrian<sup>r</sup>: because these two passages exhibit such a character of him, as the Epistle itself suggests of its author, and have likewise material influence on the question, whether the Epistle was intended for the use of Christians only, or of Jews as well as of Christians.

The account, which Josephus has given, relates to the death of St. James, which must have happened during St. Paul's imprisonment, and is delivered in the following words<sup>s</sup>. 'The emperor, being informed of the death of Festus, sent Albinus to be prefect of Judæa. But the younger Ananus, who, as we said before, was made high priest, was haughty in his behaviour, and very enterprising. He was also of the sect of the Sadducees, who, as we have also observed before, are above all other Jews severe in their judicial sentences. This then being the temper of Ananus, he thinking he had a convenient opportunity, because Festus was dead, and Albinus was not yet arrived, called a council, and brought before it James, brother<sup>t</sup> of Jesus, who was called Christ<sup>u</sup>, with several others, where they were accused of being transgressors of the law, and stoned to death. But the most moderate men of the city, who

<sup>r</sup> Euseb. Hist. Eccles. Lib. IV. c. 8.

<sup>s</sup> Antiquit. Lib. XX. cap. 9.

<sup>t</sup> In the writings of Josephus the word *αδελφος* can hardly admit of any other meaning, than that in which it was used by the Greeks. Here therefore it cannot well signify 'cousin,' and consequently it implies, that James was the son of Joseph.

<sup>u</sup> As Jesus was not an uncommon name among the Jews, Josephus adds the title of Christ merely as a mark of distinction; and this expression affords no ground for the supposition, that Josephus himself believed, that the person, of whom he spake, was the expected Messiah. What his real opinion was, is a question foreign to the present inquiry: but from his manner of speaking of the death of St. James in this place, and from the excellent character, which he gives of John the Baptist in another, he seems to have been at least no enemy to Christianity, whether the celebrated passage, Antiquit. XVIII. 3. 3. relative to Christ and his miracles, be genuine (as I myself believe), or not.

who were also the most learned in the laws<sup>w</sup>, were offended at this proceeding. They sent therefore privately to the king, and intreated him to give orders to Ananus to abstain from such conduct in future. And some went to meet Albinus, who was coming from Alexandria, and represented to him, that Ananus had no right to call a council without his permission. Albinus, approving of what they said, wrote a very severe letter to Ananus, threatening to punish him for what he had done. And king Agrippa<sup>x</sup> took away from him the priesthood, after he had possessed it three months, and appointed in his stead Jesus, the son of Damnaeus.<sup>y</sup> From this account of Josephus we learn, that St. James, notwithstanding he was a Christian, was so far from being an object of hatred to the Jews, that he was rather beloved and respected. At least his death excited very different sensations from that of the elder James<sup>y</sup>; and the Sadducean high priest, at whose instigation he suffered, was punished for his offence by the loss of his office.

The account given by Hegeippus<sup>z</sup> contains an intermixture of truth and fable, and in some material points

<sup>w</sup> Here Josephus meant probably the Pharisees, who were much less inimical to the Christians, than the Sadducees were, as appears from Acts v. 34—39. xxiii. 6—9. The high priests Annas and Caiaphas, who had been the chief instruments in bringing Christ to the cross, were likewise Sadducees; and, as appears from Acts v. 28. they considered those, who asserted the resurrection of Christ, and confirmed by it his divine mission, as persons, who endeavoured to bring Christ's blood on their heads. Now the younger Ananus was son of Annas, and brother in law of Caiaphas; and James was not only a teacher of Christianity, and highly respected by the Jews, but was likewise a special witness to the truth of Christ's resurrection, as St. Paul relates, 1 Cor. xv. 7.

<sup>x</sup> That Agrippa did not entertain unfavourable sentiments of Christianity, and that in his opinion a teacher of the Gospel by no means deserved to suffer death, is evident from Acts xxv. 23—xxvi. 32. especially from the two last verses of the twenty-sixth chapter.

<sup>y</sup> Acts xii. 1—3.

<sup>z</sup> Euseb. Hist. Eccles. Lib. II. cap. 23.

points contradicts the relation of Josephus, to which no objection can be made. It confirms however the assertion, that St. James was in great repute among the Jews, even among those, who did not believe in Christ; and that they paid him much greater deference, than we might suppose they would have shewn to a Christian bishop, and a brother of Christ, whom they had crucified. The words of Hegesippus, as quoted by Eusebius, are the following. ‘ James, the brother of our Lord, undertook, together with the Apostles <sup>a</sup>, the government of the church. He has been called the Just by all, from the time of our Saviour to the present time. Many have borne the name of James: but this man was holy from his mother’s womb. He drank neither wine, nor strong drink, nor did he eat any animal food <sup>b</sup>. There came no razor on his head. He neither anointed himself with oil, nor did he use a bath. To him alone was it lawful to enter the sanctuary. He wore no woollen, but only linen garments. He entered into the temple alone, where he prayed upon his knees: so that his knees were become like the knees of a camel, in consequence of his being continually upon them, worshipping God, and praying for the forgiveness of the people. On account of his virtue he was called the Just, and Oblias, that is, the defence of the people, and righteousness, as the prophets speak of him. Some therefore of the seven sects, which were among the Jews, of whom I spake in the former part of these commentaries, asked him, Which was

<sup>a</sup> Here James, the brother of Jesus, is distinguished in express terms from the Apostles. Hegesippus therefore does not speak of an Apostle James. Nor did Eusebius consider James, the brother of Jesus, as one of the Apostles, from whom he plainly distinguishes him, saying in the beginning of the third chapter, in which he quotes this passage of Hegesippus, ‘ James, the brother of our Lord, whom the Apostles appointed bishop of Jerusalem.’

<sup>b</sup> Hegesippus represents St. James as being more holy than Christ himself, who ate meat, drank wine, and was more than once anointed.



was the gate of Jesus<sup>c</sup>? and he said, This is our Saviour. Some of them therefore believed, that Jesus was the Christ. But the seven sects did not believe a resurrection, nor that any one would come, to reward every man according to his works. They however, who believed, did it for the sake of James. And since many of the chief men believed, a disturbance arose among the Jews, among the Scribes and Pharisees, who apprehended there was danger, that all the people would think Jesus to be the Christ. Coming therefore to James, they said, We beseech thee to restrain the error of the people. We intreat thee to persuade all that come hither at the time of the passover, to think rightly concerning Jesus: for all the people, and all of us place confidence in thee, and testify that thou art Just, and art no respecter of persons. Place thyself therefore on the battlement of the temple, that being placed on high thou mayest be conspicuous, and that thy words may be easily heard by all the people: for on account of the passover all the tribes are come hither, and many Gentiles. Therefore the Scribes and Pharisees placed James upon the battlement of the temple, and cried out to him and said, O thou just man, whom we ought all to believe, the people are in error following Jesus, who was crucified: tell us therefore, what is the gate of Jesus the crucified. And he answered with a loud voice, Why do you ask me concerning Jesus the son of man? He sitteth in heaven, at the right hand of the great Power, and will come in the clouds of heaven. Many therefore believed, and were well pleased with the testimony of James, saying, Hosanna to the son of David! But the Scribes and Pharisees said to one another, We have done wrong in procuring such

<sup>c</sup> Mosheim (De Rebus Christian. ante Constant. M. p. 95.) supposes, and I think his supposition highly probable, that the question proposed to St. James was, 'Which is the gate of salvation (יְשׁוּעָה)?' and that Hegesippus confounded יְשׁוּעָה with יֵשׁוּעַ and thus converted the question into, 'Which is the gate of Jesus?'



such a testimony to Jesus. Let us go up and throw him down, that the people may be terrified from giving credit to him.' Hegesippus then relates, what is of less consequence to the present purpose, the circumstances attending his death, that he was thrown down from the temple, stoned, and finally killed by the stroke of a fuller's club. Now many parts of the preceding account are undoubtedly fabulous, especially that part, which relates to the request of the Jews, that St. James would openly declare from the battlements of the temple, that Jesus was not the Messiah. Indeed if this were true, it would not redound to his honour: for it would imply, that he had acted with duplicity, and not taken a decided part in favour of Christianity, or the Jews could never have thought of making such a request. But that a person, who was the head of the church in Jerusalem, should have acted such a double part, as to leave it undecided what party he had embraced, and that too for thirty years after the ascension, is in itself almost incredible. It is inconsistent likewise with the relation of Josephus, and is virtually contradicted both by St. Paul and by St. Luke, who always speak of him with the utmost respect, and have no where given the smallest hint, that he concealed the principal doctrines of the Christian religion<sup>d</sup>.

From what has been said in this section, it appears, that the opinion entertained in the early ages of Christianity, that St. James, called the brother of Jesus, was the author of the Epistle in question, is by no means improbable: and the more I consider it, the more I am inclined to prefer it to that, which prevailed in the time of Jerom. A person, who was brother, that is, brother in law, of the founder of the Christian religion, who presided many years over the Christian community in Jerusalem, who was considered as one of the pillars of

<sup>d</sup> See 1 Cor. xv. 7. Gal. i. 19. ii. 6—9. Acts xv. 13—29. xxi. 18—26.

of the church, and who at the same time was so delicate in his conduct toward the Jews, that even they, who did not believe, respected him, is exactly such a person, as the author of our Epistle, as far as we may judge from its contents, appears to have been. Absolute certainty however is hardly to be obtained, because our historical information is here defective. We have no writer to whom we can appeal on this subject; and Hegeſippus, who lived in the former part of the second century, and who therefore had the means of procuring intelligence, has so blended his account with fable, that no dependence can be placed on it.



#### S E C T. IV.

*Of the persons, to whom this Epistle was written.*

**S**T. JAMES, the author of this Epistle (whether the elder or the younger James, or whether he was a brother of Christ, I leave here undecided), begins in the following manner: ‘James, a servant of God, and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes, which are scattered abroad, greeting.’ He addressed therefore his Epistle, not to heathen converts, but to native Jews\*, who lived out of Palestine†, and (since the

\* That the ten tribes really returned from the Babylonian captivity, is shewn in Benson’s Prolegomena; and I have confirmed it in my essay entitled, *De exilio decem tribuum*, printed in the *Commentationes societati regiae Goettingensi per annos 1758—1762, oblatae*.

† The opinion of Beza, relative to the word *διασπορα*, which however is inconsistent with the use of this word among the Hellenists, may be seen in Lardner’s Supplement, Vol. III. Ch. xvii. § 3.

the Epistle is written in Greek) who spake the Greek language. The question however still remains to be asked; Did he address it to Jews in general, including unbelievers as well as believers, or only to those, who were already converted?

Many writers, among whom is Lardner<sup>a</sup>, have adopted the former opinion. Now this opinion would be thought very extraordinary, if it were not in some measure countenanced by the character, which has been given of James, the brother of Jesus, whom Lardner considers as the same with the younger Apostle James. For a writer, who was the head of the Christian church in Jerusalem, or an Apostle of Christ, could hardly expect that an Epistle full of exhortations would have influence on the conduct of unbelieving Jews. And if he had thought it necessary to write to men of this description, we might have expected, that he would endeavour to convince them of the truth of Christianity, rather than admonish and reprimand them in the tone of an established teacher. But, as I have already observed, the character of St. James makes the opinion less improbable, and renders it worthy of examination.

Some of the arguments, which have been alleged in its support, are however incapable of defence. For instance, appeal has been made to ch. v. 1—6. where St. James says, ‘Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for the miseries, that shall come upon you, &c.’: and hence it has been inferred, that St. James addressed himself to persons, who were not Christians. Now this argument rests entirely on the supposition, that none of the primitive Christians could have deserved this censure, and that they were all in a state of perfect regeneration, a supposition, which is absolutely inconsistent with the description, which St. Paul has given of the Corinthians in his two Epistles to them. It will be said perhaps in reply, that St. James could hardly mean Christians, when he wrote ver. 6. ‘Ye have killed the just one.’ But are there no examples of impious Christians, as well as  
of

<sup>a</sup> Supplement, Vol. III. Ch. xviii. § 3.

of impious Jews, and are there not murderers among the former, as well as among the latter? In this passage however, I would not understand the word ‘kill’ in its literal sense, because both Christians and Jews were subject to the Roman laws, and could not take away the life of another, without forfeiting their own. I would ascribe to it therefore the sense of, ‘to take away from another all that he has,’ in the same manner as Cicero has used it in his Oration for Quintius<sup>h</sup>, though with a variation in the words and expressions. Besides, it is really a matter of doubt, whether St. James in ch. v. 6. though he there speaks in the second person, meant those to whom he was writing. He made use perhaps of the figure called Apostrophe, and thus addressed the rich in ver. 6. in order to represent in more lively colours the consolation, which he administers to the poor in the next verse. It is true, that this figure is not very suitable to the familiar epistolary style; but the Epistle of St. James has in many other places terms of expression, which are more usual in poetry than in letter-writing.

Another argument for the opinion, that the Epistle of St. James was addressed to unbelieving, as well as to believing Jews, is derived from the circumstance, that St. James warns his readers against gross and ungodly behaviour. But if this argument proved any thing, it would prove too much: for it would prove with equal force, that the two Epistles to the Corinthians were not written to Christians.

The

<sup>h</sup> Examine the following expressions in this oration, in their connexion with the question of law, which was the subject of debate. C. 2. quorum in alterius manu vita posita est, and in the same chapter, qui caput alterius, famam, fortunamque omnes defendam. C. 7. iste caput petere non desinebat, that is, the object of the prosecution was to obtain, not a certain sum, but the whole fortune of Quintius. C. 8. se de capite suo priore loco causam dicturum. C. 9. 11. sanguinem vitamque eripere, interficere. C. 12. 13. ne numeretur inter vivos? decernat de vita et ornamentis suis omnibus?—jugulare—contra caput dicere—ut hominis propinqui caput incolume esse patiamur: and many other expressions of the same kind in C. 14, 15, 16. 22. 29. 31.



The only argument of any consequence is, that St. James addressees his Epistle in general terms, ch. i. 1. 'to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad,' without any restricting clause, which might confine the meaning to believers only: and that in ch. ii. 2. he calls their place of public worship by the name of *συναγωγή*, which denotes not a Christian, but a Jewish assembly. However to this argument may be opposed others, which are more decisive on the other side of the question.

1. St. James says, ch. i. 3. 'the trying of your faith worketh patience.' He could hardly mean any other than Christian faith: for though the Jews, who believed in Moses, had their sufferings, as well as they who believed in Christ, yet the sufferings of the Jews in the time of St. James could not be called trials of their faith, because no one compelled them to renounce it. But the case of the Christians was different; for they really had trials of their faith, since the persecutions, which they underwent, were on account of their faith.

2. In ch. ii. 1. St. James speaks in express terms of faith in Jesus Christ, which he cautions his readers not to hold *εν προσωποληψιαις της δοξης*<sup>1</sup>. Now this admonition necessarily implies that his readers already believed in Christ, at least to all outward appearance, or St. James could not have cautioned them against an abuse of their faith in Christ.

It is certain therefore that St. James wrote to persons, who were already converted from Judaism to Christianity. At the same time I believe, as St. James was highly respected by the Jews in general, that it was his wish and intention, that unbelieving Jews also should read it, and be converted, and that this wish and intention had some influence on the choice of his materials.

<sup>1</sup> I here use the words of the original, because I think the common translation faulty.

## S E C T. V.

*Of the contents of this Epistle.*

FROM the character, which Hegesippus has given of St. James, though his description is highly exaggerated, it appears that St. James was more a moralist, than a dogmatist: and this character is visible throughout the whole of his Epistle, which contains rather moral precepts, than points of doctrine. It is extraordinary, that on this very account some commentators have objected to the Epistle, and doubted of its divine inspiration. Luther for this reason called it an Epistle of straw: but we might with equal reason apply this term to Christ's sermon on the mount. The moral part of the New Testament is necessary, as well as the doctrinal: and an Epistle is not to be despised, because it is chiefly moral, and contains no disquisitions on the death and sacrifice of Christ.

In each of St. Paul's Epistles the former part is for the most part doctrinal, and only the latter part exhortatory. On the contrary, where St. James has introduced points of doctrine, as for instance, that God is not the cause of our temptation to evil, or that faith without works is insufficient for salvation, he does it only occasionally, and by way of illustration. I conclude therefore that in the scattered communities, for which he designed his Epistle, no material errors generally prevailed: for in this case St. James would have had the same motive for writing on points of doctrine, as St. Paul and other Apostles, who were induced to be explicit on doctrinal matters, because errors on these subjects prevailed in the communities, to which they wrote. That St. James has no where taught the abolition of the Levitical law<sup>k</sup>, is to be ascribed to the circumstance, that he addressed

<sup>k</sup> He speaks indeed Ch. i. 25. ii. 12. of the 'law of liberty:' but this cannot be construed into an assertion that the Levitical law ceased to be in force.

addressed his Epistle to native Jews, who were permitted to retain the laws and customs of their ancestors, till they dwindled away of themselves. That he has no where even mentioned the duties, which Jewish converts owe to heathen converts in the Christian church, I have already observed in the second section of this chapter, where I deduced from this omission an argument in favour of the early date of this Epistle.

The precepts and exhortations, which are arranged, not systematically, but so as they occasionally occurred to the writer, may be reduced to the following heads.

1. St. James exhorts his readers, to bear with patience the misfortunes and persecutions, which they endured on account of their faith: and cautions them not to murmur against God, or to ascribe to him their temptations to a renunciation of their faith, ch. i. 2—21. The six last verses of this chapter, which may be summed up in the following words, ‘if ye know these things, happy are ye, if ye do them,’ form the conclusion of this exhortation.

2. In the next place he exhorts them to a contempt of riches (on which subject he had briefly touched, ch. i. 11, 12), as being the surest means of fortifying themselves against affliction. He knew probably that the Jews, to whom he wrote, set a high value on riches, and considered worldly prosperity as a mark of divine favour. He warns them therefore, not to be admirers of a brilliant exterior, nor to imagine, that wealth and honours are alone worthy of esteem, which he probably means by *προσωποληψια της δοξης*, ch. ii. 1. And, to render this precept more intelligible, he supposes the case of two strangers coming at the same time into the synagogue, the one poorly, the other richly dressed<sup>1</sup>. If the value of their clothes determined the respect to be paid to them, the one might be treated with much less, the other with much greater honour than he deserved. The poor man might be a valuable and sincere member of the Christian church, and though indigent in this world,

<sup>1</sup> Ch. ii. 2—9.

world, might be destined to be rich in the world to come. The rich man on the contrary might be an enemy of the Christians, an oppressor of the poor, and might have visited the synagogue, not to set an example of devotion, but merely to gratify his curiosity, or perhaps to find an object for the exercise of his ridicule<sup>m</sup>. St. James then proceeds, ch. ii. 10—26. to some general reflexions on the necessity of acting agreeably to our conviction, and asserts, that whoever wilfully transgresses one point of the law, shews a contempt for the whole law. This leads him to the consideration of the necessity of good works in general: and he concludes by saying, that faith without works is like a body without a soul<sup>n</sup>.

In the fourth chapter he resumes the subject of love for worldly possessions and enjoyments, and censures those, who form to themselves imaginary schemes of happiness, without considering, that every thing depends on the will of providence, and that all their plans may be defeated in a moment<sup>o</sup>. This consideration leads him, ch. v. 1—6. to address the rich, who are too frequently oppressors of the poor, in severe, and at the same time poetical, language. The whole passage is a kind of apostrophe; for he addresses and threatens those, to whom he does not immediately write. In ver. 7—11. he returns from the rich to the poor, whom he comforts, and exhorts to bear adversity with patience.

I believe likewise that the 12th verse of the fifth chapter (which appears to be a fragment of Christ's sermon on the mount) belongs to the same subject, and that it is connected with ch. iv. 13, 14. where St. James had said, 'Go to now, ye that say, to day or to morrow we

<sup>m</sup> We must not however suppose that St. James meant to give rules for the arrangement of seats in a Christian church, and that a distinction of ranks is unlawful.

<sup>n</sup> It must be observed that St. James's doctrine, relative to faith and works, is introduced only in an illustration of the preceding discourse. But many commentators, not attending to the occasion of its introduction, have taken it for an essential part of this Epistle.

\* Ch. iv. 13—17.



we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell and get gain, whereas ye know not, what shall be on the morrow,' If this supposition be true, ch. v. 12. contains not a prohibition of serious oaths, by which we bind ourselves to the performance of certain duties, but only of wanton oaths, by which we endeavour in common conversation to give energy to an assertion, that we will do this or that, that we will go to this or that city, &c. St. James then concludes, ch. v. 13—18. with an exhortation to confide in the Supreme Being, whether in prosperity or in adversity<sup>p</sup>.

3. In the third chapter St. James censures the great desire, which many had to teach publicly in the place of worship. This must not be understood of a desire to obtain the office of a minister or bishop, for this explanation renders the passage obscure. We must make a distinction between holding an ecclesiastical office, and teaching in the place of public worship, for among the Jews, and likewise among the primitive Christians, the latter did not necessarily imply the former. In the Jewish synagogues, after a chapter had been read from the Bible, every man who had sufficient learning and ability, was permitted to expound and to exhort: and the same custom prevailed in the primitive church. St. James therefore warns his readers against the abuse of this liberty, and advises them to be cautious how they spake in public, because it was extremely difficult to perform this task with propriety. St. James had probably been informed, that many of those who were so forward to deliver their sentiments, harangued only to gratify their vanity, and that they censured others, not so much to promote piety, as to gratify private hatred and envy. For this reason, after having censured the abuses of public speaking, he proceeds to the source of those abuses,

<sup>p</sup> What St. James says ver. 14. relative to the anointing of the sick, I do not think necessary to explain at present: and I will only observe, that he used perhaps the word *αλειφω*, not merely in the confined sense of anointing, but in the more extensive sense of administering medicine in general.

abuses, namely, hatred and envy : and concludes, ch. iv. 11, 12. with an exhortation, not to calumniate and unjustly judge our brethren.

Whether the Jewish converts, to whom St. James wrote his Epistle, had places of worship apart from the synagogue, and in these places the abuses prevailed, which St. James censures; or whether they still met in the synagogue, and certain Christians abused the privilege of speaking, so as to create disorder, is a question, which has not yet been examined, and which I propose for future consideration. The latter is at least not impossible: for it appears from the Acts of the Apostles, that in the age, in which the Epistle of St. James was written, Christians, and even the Apostles themselves, were permitted to teach in the Jewish synagogues.

I will conclude this section with the following remarks.

1. Though St. James lived in Jerusalem, he has quoted the Old Testament, not according to the Hebrew text, but according to the Septuagint, whence it appears that he was very conversant with the Greek Bible. However there is one passage, namely, that quoted in Ch. iv. 5. which has not yet been discovered in the Septuagint. I formerly made an attempt in my Latin notes to this Epistle to point out the place: but I now perceive that the attempt was unsuccessful.

2. The style of this Epistle is not more unclassical, than that of other books of the New Testament; and the thoughts, especially such as are figurative, are elegant and lively, so that St. James appears to have been endued with a poetical genius.

3. The language is more figurative, than that of a Greek Epistle written by a classic author would be. It is sometimes poetical, sometimes oratorical, and has the usual marks of oriental composition.

4. There occur sometimes words, which a correct Greek writer would not have used in those places, for instance *πορειαι*<sup>9</sup>, ch. i. 11, and *βεληθεις*, ch. i. 18.

This

<sup>9</sup> Here St. James uses this word to denote career, or course of life, in which sense it is not used even in the Septuagint.

This perhaps may be ascribed to the circumstance, that the author was not much accustomed to write Greek.

5. The materials are not methodically arranged : there are frequent transitions from one subject to another : and even where the same subject is continued, the connexion of one period with another is not always obvious. Sometimes St. James quits a subject, which he appears to have finished, and after he has discussed some other topic returns to the subject, which he had before quitted. This arrangement is very different from that of St. Paul's Epistles.

6. It is remarkable, that in this short Epistle two passages occur, which are perfect hexameters, namely in ch. i. 17. iv. 4. Was St. James, who lived in Palestine, accustomed to read Greek verses : did he quote from Christian hymns in the Greek language : or what was the origin of these hexameters ?

7. Wetstein in his Note to ch. iv. 5. has drawn a parallel between several passages in this Epistle, and passages in the Wisdom of Solomon, which in Wetstein's opinion warrant the conclusion that St. James borrowed from this book. I wish that this question were examined more minutely, especially as I have hardly ever met with a passage in other parts of the New Testament, which was taken from the Wisdom of Solomon. However, it is not improbable, that St. James, as he lived in Jerusalem, where Chaldee was spoken, endeavoured to familiarise himself with the Greek language by studying the Greek Apocrypha more diligently, than the other writers of the New Testament appear to have done\*.

\* Compare Ch. i. 19. with Ecclesiasticus v. 11.

## SECT. VI.

*Whether St. James's doctrine, concerning faith and works, contradicts St. Paul's doctrine of faith without works.*

**S**T. PAUL in his Epistle to the Romans, ch. iii. 28. asserts, 'that a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the law:' and this doctrine he delivers in many other places. St. James, on the contrary, asserts, ch. ii. 17. 20. 'that faith without works is dead,' and ver. 22. says that 'Abraham our father was justified by works.' The question therefore is, how are these assertions, which apparently contradict each other, to be reconciled? The usual methods of reconciling them I think are unsatisfactory, because they ascribe to the words of St. Paul and St. James meanings, of which they are hardly capable. But the contradiction will vanish immediately, if we only attend to the different senses, in which the two writers have used the words 'faith,' and 'justification.'

When St. Paul asserts, that we are justified by faith, it is evident that he means faith in the death and sacrifice of Christ. He has fully explained his own meaning in the very chapter, from which the preceding quotation was made. For he says, Rom. iii. 22. 'the righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ:' ver. 25. 'whom God hath set forth, to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood:' and ver. 26. 'that he might be just, and the justifier of him, which believeth in Jesus.'

St. James, on the contrary, in the place, where he has been supposed to differ from St. Paul, does not speak of faith in Christ, and his sacrifice, but of faith in the one true God\*. This appears from ch. ii. 19. where he  
says

\* I do not mean to say that St. James has in no part of his Epistle spoken of faith in Christ, for he speaks of it in express terms, Ch. ii. 1. I mean only to assert, that in that particular place, with which we are now concerned, he does not mean faith in Christ.



says ‘thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe and tremble.’ This example St. James quotes, as a proof that a belief alone in the one true God is not sufficient for salvation. We shall more clearly perceive the meaning of St. James, and the force of his proof, if we recollect, that according to the Jewish notions of idolatry, which St. Paul had delivered, 1 Cor. x. 19, 20, 21. devils or evil spirits were worshipped in the gods of the heathens. For the heathens considered their gods only as intermediate spirits between themselves and the infinite eternal Being, who was above all things: and they likewise called their gods *δαίμονια*. But spirits, who suffer themselves to be adored by men, must be evil spirits, and disobedient to the Supreme Being, to whom alone adoration is due. Now these evil spirits, or devils, says St. James, though they are worshipped as gods, are convinced, that there is only one God: they have in this respect as much faith as Abraham; but their works do not harmonize with their faith, since they take delight in being worshipped by men. Their faith therefore in the one true God, instead of procuring them happiness, tends only to their condemnation: and they tremble before that God, who will annihilate their assumed divinity, and punish them for being the seducers of mankind.

That men are justified by faith in the one true God, and that every Jew, who believed in this fundamental article, would be saved, is a doctrine, which St. Paul has never delivered. But some persons, who were known to St. James, must have taught this doctrine, or he would not have taken so much pains to confute it: and these persons were certainly Jews<sup>1</sup>, not disciples of St. Paul. For Jewish writers in their comments on Gen. xv. 6. and likewise on other occasions, assert, that they obtained  
salvation

<sup>1</sup> To quote passages from Rabbinic writings would be superfluous: but I will quote one from the works of Philo, who was a contemporary of St. James, Tom. II. p. 442. Mangey. ‘Therefore he is said to have been the first, who believed in God: for he was the first, who maintained the firm and unchangeable position, that there is *one* supreme cause, which protects the world and every thing in the world.’

salvation by faith<sup>u</sup>; but the faith, of which they speak, is only faith in the one true God, or at the utmost, faith also in a future state. Now St. James, in denying that this faith, if unaccompanied by works, would procure salvation, has said nothing more than St. Paul himself has said, though in other words, in the second chapter of his Epistle to the Romans, where he combats the same Jewish error, and asserts, that not the hearers, but the doers only of the law will be justified, and that a knowledge of God's will without the performance of it, serves only to increase our condemnation.

Further the word 'justification,' which is a very material term in the two supposed contradictory doctrines, is used by St. James in a different sense from that in which it is used by St. Paul. In the third chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, where St. Paul says that we are justified through faith in Christ, he uses the term 'justified' to denote 'pronounced just and exempt from punishment, or, pardoned in respect to our former sins.' Now it is evident, that if we have trespassed in the former part of our lives, subsequent good works, which it is our duty at all times to perform, will not render us innocent in respect to our past offences, and indeed no human court of Justice would admit of this plea. Equally evident is it, that the works of the Levitical law, such as the offering of animals, cannot produce a remission of sins, or justification, in St. Paul's sense of the word. But this term may be used in other senses, though we are accustomed in our systems of divinity to give it that sense only, which was ascribed to it by St. Paul. For instance, justification may denote a declaration of the Deity that a particular person is morally good, virtuous, and holy: as it is said of Job, that he was no hypocrite, that he had not his equal on earth,

<sup>u</sup> Mohammed likewise has taught this doctrine, which he learnt from the Jews. The Koran promises eternal salvation to the faithful. Now by the faithful, in the Koran, are understood they who believe in the unity of the Godhead, and in the resurrection of the dead: and by the unfaithful, they who deny these articles,

earth, that he feared God, and fled from evil. And that St. James really used the word justification in this sense appears from what he adds, ch. ii. 23. ‘and he was called the friend of God.’ Now if we take the term justification in this sense, it is clear that Abraham’s justification must be ascribed, not to his faith only, but likewise to his works, as St. James asserts, ch. ii. 21—23. For if Abraham, with all his faith in God, had refused to offer his son Isaac, he would not have been justified. And on the other hand, works alone without faith would not have justified him. For, if he had offered his son without faith in God, without believing in God’s infinite power, and ability to raise Isaac from the dead, he would not only have been a murderer, and a defiler of the altar, but in his heart must have accused God of a violation of his word, in first promising to bless Isaac’s posterity, and then commanding him to be sacrificed before he had children.

From what has been already said in this section, it appears, that it was by no means St. James’s intention, as many suppose, to prevent St. Paul’s doctrine on the efficacy of faith from being falsely understood: for it is not a misinterpretation of St. Paul’s doctrine, against which St. James argues, but an erroneous doctrine of the Jews, which St. Paul combats, as well as St. James. Nor is the confutation of this doctrine the principal object of the Epistle, for St. James introduces it merely to enforce what he had said relative to certain offences, such as complaining against God, and oppressing the poor; and to convince his readers, that a knowledge of the law, if they did not follow it, would not avail them. In fact the supposition, that St. James intended to prevent a misinterpretation of St. Paul’s doctrine is in itself almost incredible: for no man, whose object was merely to prevent the doctrine of another from being falsely understood, would express himself in such a manner, that his readers might suppose he meant to combat the doctrine itself. Whoever subscribes to the doctrine advanced by another, but is apprehensive that it may be



falsely understood, will limit and explain that doctrine ; and will not make use of terms, which have the appearance, rather of a confutation, than of an explanation. But whether the author of this Epistle was the elder or the younger James, I think no one, who has read the Acts of the Apostles, can suppose, that he meant really to combat St. Paul's doctrine, and that he designedly made use of expressions, which might counteract what St. Paul had asserted.

Lastly, I think it highly probable, that St. James, when he wrote his Epistle, had not seen St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans. For if he had, he would probably have delivered his doctrine relative to faith and works in other words, and would have avoided the use of terms, which St. Paul had adopted in his doctrine of faith without works : since he must have been aware, that the use of the same terms would unavoidably create at least an apparent contradiction to the doctrine of St. Paul.

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## S E C T. VII.

*Of the time, when the Epistle of St. James was written.*

**M**OST commentators\* suppose that this Epistle was written about the year 60 or 61. But the arguments, which have been advanced in favour of this late date, are very unstable. Appeal has been made to ch. iv. 4—6. where St. James is said to have quoted from Rom. viii. 6. 7. Gal. v. 6. and 1 Pet. v. 5 : and thence it has been inferred, that this Epistle was written later, than St. Paul's Epistles to the Romans and the Galatians,

\* See for instance Jo. Henr. Michaelis Introd. in Ep. Jacobi, § 8. Millii Prolegomena, § 56. and Lardner's Supplement, Vol. III. Ch. xvii. § 2.



Galatians, and the first Epistle of St. Peter. But one of the two passages, which St. James quotes, ch. iv. 4—6. is in the Old Testament, in Prov. iii. 24. from which place St. James probably took it : and the other quotation, which has not yet been discovered in the Old Testament, could not have been made either from the Epistle to the Romans, or from that to the Galatians, for I have never been able to find the passage in either of them. Another argument in favour of a late date is derived from the supposition that St. James intended to prevent a misconstruction of St. Paul's doctrine of faith in the Epistle to the Romans : but, as I have shewn in the preceding section, that this supposition is false, the inference derived from it falls of itself to the ground. A third argument has been derived from ch. v. 8. : but this I have already answered in the second section of this chapter.

In fact, the arguments, which I have used in the latter part of the second section, render it probable that the Epistle was written long before the Epistle to the Romans, and even before St. Paul had preached the Gospel to the Gentiles ; since it was addressed to Jews, and no mention is made in it of brotherly love toward Gentile converts. I conclude therefore, that this was written before the events, which are recorded in Acts xiii., took place, and even before the death of the elder James, whether he, or the younger James was the author of it.

The only objection to this early date is, that St. Paul, if he had written his Epistle to the Romans, after the Epistle of St. James had been written, would have avoided in the third and fourth chapters an appearance of contradiction to St. James. But as the Epistle of St. James was sent perhaps to the Jews of Egypt, Cyrene, Syria, and Cyprus, countries in which the Christian religion was soon propagated, it was probably unknown in Rome, when St. Paul wrote to the Romans, and therefore he had no reason to apprehend that the Romans would suppose he contradicted St. James:

and if they did suppose so, a more minute examination must convince them, that the contradiction was only apparent, and that St. Paul spake of faith in the death and sacrifice of Christ, but St. James of faith in the one true God. Or the Epistle of St. James, though it existed when St. Paul wrote to the Romans, might have remained unknown to him.

They who ascribe the Epistle to the elder James, of course agree with me in respect to its early date. Bede<sup>\*</sup> likewise, though he ascribes it to the James, of whom St. Paul speaks, Gal. ii. 12. is still of opinion that it was written soon after the death of the martyr Stephen, and addressed to those converts, of whom it is said, Acts viii. 4. that they were scattered abroad.

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## S E C T. VIII.

### *Of the canonical authority of this Epistle.*

**O**N the canonical authority of this Epistle the ancients were very much divided; nor do modern writers agree on this subject. I confess likewise, that I myself am greatly in doubt, though I consider the question in a different light from most other authors. But before I deliver my own sentiments, I will state and examine what has been advanced on this head, both in ancient, and in modern times.

In the earliest ages of Christianity the Epistle was rejected by many, not only as uncanonical, but as spurious. Eusebius in the celebrated chapter of his Ecclesiastical History, B. III. ch. 25. where he treats of the writings of the New Testament, which he divides into *ὁμολογούμενα*, *αντιλεγόμενα*, and *νοθα*, places the Epistle of St.

<sup>\*</sup> In his Exposition of the Epistle of St. James, Ch. i. v. Vol. V. p. 673. of the Cologne edition of his works.

St. James in the second class, saying; ‘among the controverted, but yet approved by many, are, the Epistle ascribed to James, and that of Jude, and the second of Peter, and the second and third of John.’ And in B. II. ch. 23. where Eusebius speaks of the James, who was stoned to death at the instigation of Ananus, he says toward the end of the chapter, ‘It is reported that the first among the Catholic Epistles, as they are called, was written by him. But it must be observed that this Epistle is now considered as spurious; for not many ancient writers have noticed it, any more than the Epistle of Jude, which is another of the seven Epistles called Catholic. We know however that these also, together with the rest, are publicly read in most churches.’ From these two passages it appears that Eusebius himself doubted, whether the Epistle was genuine. Jerom also seems to have remained in doubt, though he does not deny the opinion which others entertained of its spuriousness. For he says in his catalogue of ecclesiastical writers, ‘*Jacobus, qui appellatur frater Domini, cognomento Justus—unam tantum scripsit epistolam, quæ de catholicis est: quæ et ipsa ab alio quodam sub nomine ejus edita asseritur, licet paullatim, tempore procedente, obtinuerit auctoritatem.*’ From this confession of Jerom we see, that the Epistle was in much less repute in the second and third centuries, than at the end of the fourth. The ecclesiastical writers before the time of Eusebius, as well those who have noticed, as those who have not noticed this Epistle, are enumerated by Lardner, in his Supplement to the Credibility of the Gospel History, Vol. III. ch. 17.: whence it appears, that, if we except a few uncertain and only imaginary allusions, the Epistle is not quoted in a single instance either by Irenæus, Tertullian, or Clement of Alexandria, that it is quoted twice by Origen, though only as a book of uncertain authority, and in both places in reference to the doctrine, that faith without works is dead. And that Origen’s doubts in respect to this Epistle did not proceed

proceed from any objection to its contents, will appear from his own words which I will subjoin in the margin <sup>z</sup>.

Here I beg leave to make the following remarks.

1. As the ancients are so divided in regard to this Epistle, its canonical authority cannot be founded on the testimony of the church, which indeed can in no question of this kind be considered as decisive <sup>a</sup>. In fact, the testimony of the most ancient Christian church, according to the representation of Eusebius, if it decided any thing, would decide against the canonical authority of this Epistle.

2. Though Eusebius places the Epistle of St. James in the same class with that of St. Jude, the second of St. Peter, and the second and third of St. John, it has in some respects a better claim to canonical authority, than these. For neither of these four last mentioned Epistles were admitted into the Syrian canon, but the Epistle of St. James was admitted into it, and the Syriac version of this Epistle appears to have been made by the same person, who translated the other Epistles: at least no difference of style has hitherto been discovered, as in the translation of the Epistle to the Hebrews <sup>b</sup>. We must conclude therefore that, when the Syriac version was made, which was at the close of the first century, the translator found this Epistle in the Greek collection of canonical writings, and that the Syrian church received it as canonical, with the first Epistle of St. Peter and the first of St. John. And this authority it constantly retained in the Syrian church: for Ebed Jesu, a Syrian writer

<sup>z</sup> Comment. in Johannem. Tom. XIX. p. 284. ed. Colon. ‘But if that be called faith, it is dead without works, as we read in the Epistle, which is supposed to have been written by James (εν τη φεγομενη Ιακωβου αναγνωσμεν). And Tom. XXI. in his observations on Joh. viii. 39. p. 294. he says, ‘Even if it is granted that faith is a work, which however will not be granted by those who admit the passage, *faith without works is dead*’ (ε συγχωρηθει αν υπο των παραδεχομενων το, Πιστις χωρις εργα νεκρα εστι), &c.

<sup>a</sup> See what was said on this subject, in the first volume of this Introduction, Ch. iii. Sect. 2.

<sup>b</sup> See Vol. I. Ch. vii. Sect. 2.



writer of the thirteenth century, in his catalogue of the books of the New Testament, distinguishes these three from the other four, by calling them ‘the three Epistles, which are ascribed to Apostles in all books<sup>c</sup> and in all languages<sup>d</sup>.’ Ephrem, a Syrian writer of the fourth century, has in several passages of his Greek works quoted the Epistle of St. James, two of which I will transcribe, because they shew that Ephrem considered this Epistle as holy scripture, and as written by James the brother of the Lord, Tom. I. p. 18. *ειρηκε γαρ ἡ θεια γραφη· Εξομολογείσθε ἀλλήλοις τὰς ἁμαρτίας, καὶ προσευχεσθε ὑπὲρ ἀλλήλων, ὅπως ἰαθῆτε<sup>e</sup>.* Tom. III. p. 51. *Ἰακώβος δὲ ὁ τῶ κυρίου ἀδελφός λεγεί· Πενθήσατε καὶ κλαύσατε, ὁ γέλως ὑμῶν εἰς πένθος μετασφραφίτω, καὶ ἡ χαρὰ εἰς κατηφειάν<sup>f</sup>.*

3. The circumstance, which in my opinion makes it doubtful, whether the Epistle of St. James ought to be received as canonical, namely, the want of certainty that the author was an Apostle, appears, as far as I have been able to discover, to have had no influence on the judgement of ancient writers on this subject; which is the more extraordinary, because on that very ground they doubted whether the Epistle to the Hebrews was a divine work. If we may judge from the representations of

<sup>c</sup> He means MSS. of the N. T.

<sup>d</sup> In the preceding edition of this Introduction I observed, that, if the Manicheans, according to Beaufobre *Histoire des Manichéens*, Tom. I. p. 292, 293., received the Epistle of St. James, it might probably be ascribed to the circumstance, that the Epistle was received by the Syrian church, which was extended over a great part of the East. In confirmation of this assertion may be added, that the Manicheans in general did not understand Greek, but that they understood Syriac: consequently, they read the Syriac and not the Greek New Testament. However, lest the circumstance that this Epistle was received by the Manicheans should appear of greater weight than it really is, I will add the words of Augustin (*contra Faustum* L. XXXII. c. 15), because they do not distinguish the three Catholic Epistles, which the Syrian church received, from the four which it rejected: *quod quidem in Evangelio, vel in Epistolis Canonicis, quo adjuvari hæresin suam putent, id esse a Christo et Apostolis dictum teneant.*

<sup>e</sup> This is a quotation from James v. 16.

<sup>f</sup> James iv. 9.

of Eusebius and Jerom, they who rejected the Epistle, rejected it because they believed it to be spurious.

Now I wish that Eusebius and Jerom had mentioned what reasons they, who rejected this Epistle, had for supposing that it was spurious, or a forgery in the name of James the brother of Christ. The Epistle itself contains no marks whatsoever of spuriousness, whether we consider its contents, or its language: and whichever of the three suppositions we adopt, that it was written by the elder Apostle James, or by the younger Apostle James, or by James the brother of Christ, the supposition will by no means involve an absurdity. Besides, it is difficult to comprehend, what motive could have induced an impostor to forge such an Epistle, and ascribe it to either of these three persons.

It may be asked, whether the apparent contradiction between the doctrine contained in this Epistle, and that of St. Paul, in respect to the efficacy of faith, did not induce the ancients to reject it, and pronounce it spurious. But I much doubt whether this was the cause of its rejection, since no ancient writer who speaks doubtfully of the Epistle, assigns this apparent contradiction as a reason for doubting of its authenticity: and Origen in particular, as I have already observed, appears to have had no objection whatsoever to the doctrines contained in it. If however this apparent contradiction was really the cause of its rejection, it was rejected without reason, as appears from what has been said in the sixth section. Nay, what is still more, this apparent contradiction may be alleged as an argument in favour of its antiquity and authenticity. For had it been fabricated by a Christian impostor after the Apostolic age, at a time when the Epistle to the Romans was known in general to the Christian communities, the impostor would have taken care to avoid even the smallest appearance of contradiction to an Epistle, which every Christian received as divine. Besides, if the Epistle had been written after the Apostolic age, it could hardly have occurred to the author to combat the Jewish doctrine, that faith in the

one true God was alone sufficient for salvation. And, since it is directed immediately to Jews, the author of it, if he had meant to exercise a pious fraud, and promote the cause of Christianity by inventing an Epistle in the name of St. James, would surely have introduced some arguments for the truth of the Christian religion, or have at least exhorted them to embrace it: but of such arguments and exhortations the Epistle contains no traces. I have no doubt therefore that it is ancient and genuine.

Later critics who have objected to this Epistle, and have thought it undeserving a place in the sacred canon, have grounded their objections merely on its contents. Now this is a very precarious mode of determining whether a book is canonical: for when we have a divine revelation, we must believe and do what it contains, and not expunge any part of it, merely because that part displeases us. But I think there is no ground whatsoever for being displeased with the Epistle of St. James, and in my opinion its contents are highly rational and well worthy of an Apostle. The only difficulty is to prove that an Apostle was the author. That its contents are more moral than doctrinal, cannot surely form a serious ground for objection: and the epithet which Luther very unjustly applied to it, might as well be applied to the sermon on the mount. That the members of the church of Rome prove their doctrine of confession and extreme unction from ch. v. 14—16. is no reason, why protestants should reject this Epistle: for in my opinion, and I believe in the opinion of most protestant commentators, this passage does not contain any such doctrine. At the time when this Epistle was written, the practice of physic was attended with great superstition: and conscientious Jews were apprehensive that, if they sent for an heathen physician, he would either invoke some idol in the administration of his medicines, or exercise magic arts. The author of this Epistle therefore advises those, who are sick, to send for the elders of the church, that they may pray over the  
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the medicines, and then administer them to the sick. In like manner St. Paul says, that, if they who partake of the flesh of animals offered to idols, pray over it, and thank God for his bounty, they may partake of it with a good conscience.

The contents therefore of this Epistle afford no ground whatsoever for objecting to it: and the question, whether it is canonical, that is, whether we ought to receive it as a divine and infallible work, must, according to the principles which I have laid down in Vol. I. ch. iii. sect. 2. depend on the previous question, whether the author was an Apostle. If the James who wrote this Epistle, was either the elder Apostle James, the son of Zebedee, or the younger Apostle James, the son of Alphæus, it is canonical. But if it was written by the James, who was brother in law of Christ, and not an Apostle, we can have no proof of its inspiration and infallibility. Supernatural assistance was promised by Christ to the Apostles alone: and therefore, though James, the brother in law of Christ, was a man of great eminence in the church of Jerusalem, though he took a principal part in the first council, which was held there, though he is called by St. Paul a pillar of the church, and is mentioned Gal. ii. 9. even before St. Peter and St. John, yet all these circumstances put together are not sufficient to prove that his writings were divinely inspired. I conclude therefore by repeating the assertion that, if the James, who wrote this Epistle, was either the one or the other of the twelve Apostles, who bore this name, it is canonical: but if not, it is not canonical.



CHAP. XXVII.

OF THE FIRST EPISTLE OF ST. PETER.

SECT. I.

*Of the persons to whom St. Peter addressed this Epistle.*

ST. PETER begins his first Epistle with the following address: Πέτρος ἀποστόλος Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐκλεκτοῖς παρεπιδήμοις διασπορᾶς Ποντῆ, Γαλατίας, Καππαδοκίας, Ἀσίας, καὶ Βιθυνίας. These ἐκλεκτοὶ παρεπιδήμοι διασπορᾶς are supposed by many commentators to have been native Jews dispersed in these countries, who had been converted to Christianity. But I am of opinion that they were not native Jews, and for the following reasons.

1. St. Peter says, ch. i. 18. ‘Ye know, ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers.’ Now ‘vain conversation,’ according to the biblical sense of the word ‘vain,’ denotes ‘idolatrous conversation.’ Consequently the persons, to whom St. Peter wrote, were formerly idolaters, and therefore not native Jews.

2. St. Peter says in express terms, ch. iv. 3. that these very persons had spent the former part of their lives in ‘abominable idolatries.’ Here therefore he certainly meant heathen converts, for in the Apostolic age idolatry was a vice, to which the Jews were not addicted. To evade this argument, the advocates for the opinion, that St. Peter wrote to native Jews, assert that the word idolatry is here used not literally, as denoting the worship of idols, but figuratively, and that idolatry is equivalent to

\* See 1 Kings xvi. 2. 13. 26. 2 Kings xvii. 15. Isaiah x. 20. Jerem. ii. 5. viii. 19. x. 3. 8. Jonah ii. 9. Rom. i. 21.

to avarice, because a miser worships his gold; or to fornication, because this was not uncommon in the heathen temples. Now I do not deny, that idolatry is sometimes used in a figurative sense, but I cannot admit, that it is used so in the present instance. For St. Peter in this very place enumerates several other vices, all of which must be taken in their strict and literal sense: and therefore no reason can be assigned, why an exception should be made to the word 'idolatry' in particular. Besides, if we refuse to ascribe to it its literal meaning, it is impossible to determine what its meaning really is.

There are several other passages in this Epistle, which tend to confirm my opinion, though I do not consider them alone as decisive. For instance, ch. i. 14. St. Peter says: 'as obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts *in your ignorance.*' Now an ignorance of the word of God cannot easily be imputed to the Jews, who had received the oracles of God. Again he says, ch. v. 12. 'I have written briefly, exhorting and testifying, that this is the grace of God, wherein ye stand.' Here St. Peter explains the object, which he had in view, in writing this Epistle: but if he had written to native Jews, this would hardly have been his object, because the Jews were already the favourite people of God, and therefore St. Peter would not have thought it necessary to prove, that they stood in his grace.

Having produced the arguments, which induce me to believe, that St. Peter did not write to native Jews, I will now examine the arguments, which have been alleged in favour of the contrary opinion.

1. St. Peter exhorts his readers to holiness, ch. i. 15, 16. and quotes from Lev. xi. 44. the words 'Be ye holy, for I am holy.' Now these words were addressed to the Israelites: and hence it is inferred, that St. Peter likewise addressed Israelites in this Epistle. But this inference is without foundation: for an Apostle, let his readers be of what description they will, may  
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on certain occasions apply to them words, which had formerly been used to the Israelites. And in the present instance, since by the Christian dispensation the heathens became entitled to divine favour, as well as the Jews, St. Peter could with the utmost propriety apply to the former what originally had been said only to the latter.

2. Another argument is grounded on ch. ii. 9. where St. Peter says, ‘Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood,’ which words are likewise applied in the Old Testament particularly to the Jewish nation. Hence the same inference has been deduced, as from ch. i. 15, 16.: but the answer, which I have given to the one, is at the same time an answer to the other argument. Through the death of Christ the heathens acquired the same privileges, as the Jews had till then enjoyed alone: and if St. Peter had said to Christians, who had been converted from Judaism, that they were a chosen generation, he would have said it, not in respect to their origin, but in respect to their redemption by Christ. He might very properly say therefore to heathen converts, ‘Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood,’ since they were become the people of God as well as the Jews: but it would have been unnecessary to have made this declaration to those, who were native Jews, because they entertained no doubt, that they were the chosen people of God.

3. St. Peter in ch. ii. 12. exhorts his readers to walk honestly ‘among the Gentiles.’ Hence it is inferred, that they themselves were not Gentiles. This I readily grant, since St. Peter wrote to Christians: but we must not therefore conclude, that they were not Gentiles before their conversion.

4. St. Peter addressing the Christian women, ch. iii. 6. calls them ‘daughters of Sara:’ from which expression has been deduced the inference, that they were the natural descendants of Sara, and therefore native Jews. But this argument is confuted by the very passage, to which appeal is made: for St. Peter qualifies



lifies this appellation by adding ‘as long as ye do well.’ It is evident therefore, that he speaks figuratively, and that he meant to say, ‘As long as ye practise the virtues of Sara, ye deserve to be called her daughters:’ for the conditional clause wholly excludes the notion of descent by blood. The expression ‘sons of Abraham’ occurs frequently in the New Testament in a figurative sense: and though this is the only place, where the expression ‘daughters of Sara’ is used in a similar manner, yet the passage is so clear, that it admits of no doubt. For as Abraham is called the father of the faithful, so Sara may be called the mother of the faithful: and this very epithet was given to one of Mohammed’s wives.

It appears then, that the arguments advanced by those, who contend, that St. Peter wrote to native Jews, are by no means satisfactory. And the answers, which have been given them, serve at the same time to invalidate a similar opinion, that St. Peter wrote to Christian converts from the ten tribes, who had been carried captive into Assyria: for in the time of St. Peter the Israelites of the ten tribes were no more idolaters, than those of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin. There is likewise another objection, to which this opinion is exposed, namely, that the ten tribes, when this Epistle was written, did not constitute a separate people, but were intermixed with those, which returned to Palestine from the Babylonish captivity <sup>h</sup>. And if this be denied, and it be asserted, that the ten tribes did not return from the Assyrian captivity, we cannot suppose, that they resided, when this Epistle was written, in Cappadocia, Galatia, Bithynia, and in the proconsular province of Asia, in the neighbourhood of Ephesus. It is true, that St. Peter in ch. ii. 10. addresses the persons, to whom he writes, in the same words, which Hosea had used to the ten tribes. But this is no proof, that both  
writers

<sup>h</sup> See my treatise *De exilio decem tribuum*, Sect. 6—10, printed in the *Commentationes societati scientiarum Goettingensi per annos 1758—1762, oblatae*.



writers addressed themselves to the same nation: for St. Peter, in addressing heathen converts, might say of them, ‘that they were formerly not the people of God, but were now become his people,’ with as much truth as Hosea said this of the ten tribes. Besides, this very passage is likewise quoted by St. Paul in Rom. ix. 25.: and therefore if the argument proved any thing, it would prove likewise, what no one can admit, that the Epistle to the Romans was written to converts from the ten tribes.

Another opinion relative to the persons to whom St. Peter wrote, is, that they were neither native Jews alone, nor native heathens alone, but that they consisted of men of both descriptions. This opinion however is confuted by the very first verse of this Epistle, in which St. Peter calls the persons, whom he addresses, by the title of *παρεπιδημοι διασπορας Ποντις, κ. τ. λ.* For the word *διασπορα* in Jewish Greek, when followed by the name of a heathen country or people, in the genitive case, denotes the Jews, who were dispersed there. For instance, *διασπορα Ἑλληνων*, John vii. 35. signifies, at least, as I understand the passage, the Jews, who were dispersed among the Greeks: and Wetstein in his note to this verse, quotes the following passage from an apocryphal Greek fragment of Jeremiah, *γραφον εν εν τη επισολη προς Ιερεμιαν, οτι ειπατε τοις υιοις Ισραηλ — ο δε Βαρεχ απεσειλεν εις την διασποραν των εθνων*, where *διασπορα των εθνων* can have no other meaning than ‘the Jews dispersed among the Gentiles.’ Other examples, where *διασπορα*, without a genitive expressive of a heathen country, is used to denote dispersed Jews, may be seen in Deut. xxviii. 25. xxx. 4. Isaiah xlix. 6. Psalm cxlvii. 2. Nehem. i. 9. Judith v. 19. 2 Maccab. i. 27. James i. 1. Hence therefore we may infer, that St. Peter meant by *παρεπιδημοι διασπορας Ποντις, Γαλατιας, κ. τ. λ.* the Jews, who were dispersed in Pontus, Galatia<sup>i</sup>, &c.

<sup>i</sup> The word *παρεπιδημοι* likewise is an appellation more suitable to the Jews, who were dispersed in Pontus, Galatia, &c. than to the heathen inhabitants of these countries.

&c. It will be thought perhaps, that this inference contradicts what I endeavoured to prove in the former part of this section, namely, that St. Peter did not address his Epistle to native Jews. But the contradiction is only apparent: for the persons, to whom St. Peter wrote, might have been Jews by profession, though not Jews by birth, or in other words, they might have been native heathens, who were proselytes to Judaism, before their conversion to Christianity.

This last opinion is that of Dr. Benson, and which, though it has met with some opposition, I still think the most probable. The expression ‘strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, &c.’ may very properly denote Jewish proselytes, who had embraced the Christian religion, or persons, who were born heathens, but were become converts, first to Judaism, and then to Christianity. Now the Jews had two kinds of proselytes, which they called ‘proselytes of justice,’ and ‘proselytes of the gate.’ The former were circumcised, and became in every respect Jews: the latter were not circumcised, but they believed in the Jewish religion, and worshipped the one true God. Cornelius, the first native heathen, converted by St. Peter to Christianity, was a proselyte of this description: and the persons, to whom he wrote this Epistle were probably proselytes of the same kind, for the proselytes of justice were so completely Jews, that the contents of the Epistle do not so well apply to them, as to the proselytes of the gate.

The word *παρεπιδημοι*, which signifies literally ‘strangers,’ is used by St. Peter to denote ‘proselytes,’ in imitation of the rabbinical writers, who called the proselytes to their religion by the name of *גרים*, or strangers. It will be objected perhaps, that the proselytes to the Jewish religion are in no other part of the New Testament called by this name: that the proper Greek term for them is *προσηλυτοι*<sup>k</sup>, and that where this appellation

<sup>k</sup> Matth. xxiii, 15. Acts ii. 10. vi. 5. xiii. 43.

pellation is not used, they are called either *ευλαβεις*<sup>1</sup>, or *ευσεβεις*<sup>m</sup>, or *σεβομενοι τον Θεον*<sup>n</sup>, or *φοβουμενοι τον Θεον*<sup>o</sup>. And hence it will be inferred, that, if St. Peter really addressed his Epistle to Jewish proselytes, he would either have used the proper term *προσηλυτοι*, or some word, by which they are denoted in other parts of the New Testament. Now I admit, that this is a very plausible argument: but the question is; does not *παρεπιδημοι*, admit of this sense, when used by a Jewish Greek writer, since the correspondent Hebrew term *גרים* is the common appellation of proselytes, both in the Talmud, and in the works of the Rabbins? And, if it does admit of this sense, no one can prove, that it was not thus used by St. Peter. That in other parts of the New Testament, proselytes are not denoted by a term, which is literally expressive of strangers, is the less extraordinary, when we consider, that the whole New Testament is a book of no great magnitude. I believe however, that there really is one other instance of this kind in Acts ii. 10. where the Romans, who were present at Jerusalem, and who, according to ver. 5. were proselytes, are called *οι επιδημυντες Ρωμαιοι*.

If the first Epistle of St. Peter was written to Jewish proselytes, the reason is obvious, why the Apostle so frequently alludes both to Jewish customs, and to passages of the Old Testament. The supposition agrees likewise with the purport of the Epistle, which St. Peter explains, ch. v. 12. saying, ‘I have written briefly, exhorting, and testifying, that this is the true grace of God, wherein ye stand.’ For persons, who were proselytes to Judaism before their conversion to Christianity, were more in need of exhortations, and assurances of the grace of God, in which they stood, than even heathen converts, because the latter were  
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<sup>1</sup> Acts ii. 5.<sup>m</sup> Acts x. 2. 7.<sup>n</sup> Acts xiii. 50. xvi. 14. xvii. 4. 17. xviii. 7.<sup>o</sup> Acts x. 2. 22. 35. xiii. 16. 26.

less exposed to the importunities of the Jewish zealots, who maintained, that no man could be saved without the observance of the Levitical law. Now these exhortations and assurances could come from no one with greater propriety than from St. Peter, who was the first, that made a Christian convert of an uncircumcised Jewish profelyte <sup>p</sup>, and at the Apostolic council in Jerusalem, where he defended the rights of the heathens, had alleged this conversion as a proof, that the uncircumcised, as well as the circumcised, were entitled to divine favour <sup>q</sup>.

The motive, which induced St. Peter to write to Jewish profelytes, then become converts to Christianity, in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, it is difficult at present to assign, because we have not sufficient historical data. Perhaps Sylvanus, who carried this Epistle, had occasion to travel through these countries, and St. Peter embraced this opportunity of writing to the Christians, who resided in those places, through which Sylvanus's route would lead him. If this supposition be true, the reason is obvious, why St. Peter first mentions Pontus. For this was the first Grecian colony, in which Sylvanus arrived, after he had left St. Peter in Babylon; for in Mesopotamia, through which he had to travel in his way to Pontus, Syriac was the common language, and therefore a Greek Epistle would have been of no use to the Mesopotamian Christians.

<sup>p</sup> Cornelius, Acts x.

<sup>q</sup> Acts xv. 7, 8, 9.



## S E C T. II.

*Before St. Peter wrote this Epistle, he appears to have read St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans.*

A COMPARISON of 1 Pet. ii. 13, 14. with Rom. xiii. 1—5. will shew, either that St. Peter had read St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, or St. Paul the first Epistle of St. Peter.

St. Paul says, Rom. xiii. 1. *πᾶσα ψυχὴ ἐξουσίαις ὑπερέχουσιν ὑποτασσέσθω.* The expression *ἐξουσίαις ὑπερέχουσιν* is in general falsely understood, being usually translated 'higher powers,' as if inferior powers, or inferior magistrates had not likewise a right to command obedience. But this was certainly not St. Paul's meaning; and I have no doubt, that he used *ὑπερέχω* in the sense of 'protego,' and that he intended to express, 'Let every man be obedient to the power, which protects him.' Now this is a rule, which is founded on equity, and is universally applicable, whether that power had been acquired justly or unjustly. Obedience and protection are reciprocal: and as long as we enjoy the latter, we are bound to perform the former. Even in the case of conquest, the conqueror, as long as he protects us, has a right to command our obedience: and we must either quit the country, or submit to his laws. The same equitable rule, though not usually found in systems of morality, is given by St. Peter, ch. ii. 13. *ὑποταγῆτε* — *βασιλεῖ, ὡς ὑπερέχοντι.* Further, St. Paul says, Rom. xiii. 3. where he speaks of the authority of magistrates, *τοὶ ἀγαθοὶ ποιοῦν, καὶ ἐξέεις ἐπαινον ἐξ αὐτῆς*: and  
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'When *ὑπερέχω* signifies 'protego,' some such word as *δεξιαν* or *πελτην* is understood. The former is supplied by Josephus, *Antiquit.* VI. 2. 2. *παρακαλεῖ τὸν θεόν, ὑπερέχειν αὐτῶν τὴν δεξιὰν ἐν τῇ πρὸς Παλαιστίνης μάχῃ.*

in like manner St. Peter, ch. ii. 14. describes magistrates as being constituted, *εις επαινον αγαθοποιων*. This is likewise an agreement in an assertion, which, though perfectly true, is not common: for magistrates do not usually bestow commendations, but simply acquit or condemn, and the greatest praise, which a man can have in this respect is, never to have appeared before them. Lastly, St. Paul, Rom. xiii. 4. describes a magistrate as being *εκδικος εις οργην τω το κακον πρασσοντι*: St. Peter, ch. ii. 14. says of the same, that he is appointed *εις εκδικησιν κακοποιων*<sup>s</sup>.

This remarkable agreement, in the compass of two verses, affords sufficient proof, that either St. Peter had read St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, or St. Paul the first Epistle of St. Peter. But the latter is not probable, because St. Paul's writings so abound with original thoughts, that he hardly derived any of his materials from St. Peter. I conclude therefore, that the former is true: and this conclusion is confirmed by what St. Peter says in his second Epistle, ch. iii. 15, 16. where he speaks of the contents of St. Paul's Epistles in general. Further, St. Peter's style, though it has many peculiarities, comes nearer to the style of St. Paul, than that of any other writer of the New Testament. Now no one can suppose, that the writings  
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<sup>s</sup> There are other instances of agreement between the Epistle to the Romans and the first Epistle of St. Peter, though they are not so decisive as the preceding. St. Peter, ch. i. 21. speaks of faith, as being 'a belief, that God raised Christ from the dead:' and the same explanation is given by St. Paul, Rom. iv. 24. x. 9. St. Paul describes at large, Rom. vi. the nature and effects of baptism, and shews, that we obtain by it a participation of the benefits of Christ's resurrection: and St. Peter also says, though in more concise terms, ch. iii. 20. that baptism saves us through the resurrection of Christ. What St. Peter says, ch. iv. 10, 11. is the same as what St. Paul says more fully, Rom. xii. 3—8. The following passages may likewise be compared, 1 Pet. i. 2. 14. 22. with Rom. i. 5. vi. 16.—1 Pet. i. 7. with Rom. ii. 6.—1 Pet. i. 14. with Rom. xii. 2.—1 Pet. i. 18. with Rom. i. 11.—and 1 Pet. ii. 2. *λογικον* with Rom. xii. 1.

of St. Peter had any influence on the Greek style of a man, who was born at Tarsus: but the reverse of this supposition is not at all improbable.

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## S E C T. III.

*Of the time, when this Epistle was written.*

**I**F St. Peter, as I have endeavoured to shew in the preceding section, had read St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans before he wrote his first Epistle, it was written after St. Paul's journey from Corinth to Jerusalem, described in Acts xx. xxi. for the Epistle to the Romans was written from Corinth. How much later than the time of this journey the first Epistle of St. Peter was written, it is very difficult, for want of sufficient data, to determine. The Epistle itself has hardly any marks, which can guide us in deciding the year of its composition; and we know nothing of the history of St. Peter from the time of the Apostolic council in Jerusalem, Acts xv. which is the last place, where St. Luke mentions him, till his arrival many years afterwards in Rome, where, according to the accounts of ecclesiastical writers, he suffered martyrdom. However, a comparison of the first with the second Epistle of St. Peter will enable us to form at least an opinion on this subject. St. Peter says in his second Epistle, ch. iii. 1. ταυτην ηδη, αγαπητοι, δευτεραν υμιν γραφω επισολην, whence we may conclude, that his first Epistle was written to the same persons as the second. But if the second Epistle was written fifteen or twenty years after the first, they, who received the one, were not the same persons, as they, who received the other; and we might rather expect, that in this case St. Peter would have called

his first Epistle, an Epistle, which he had written to their fathers. It appears then, that the interval between the dates of the two Epistles could not have been very great; and, as the second Epistle was written shortly before St. Peter's death<sup>†</sup>, we may infer, that the first Epistle was written, either not long before, or not long after, the year 60.

I was formerly of opinion, that this Epistle was written much earlier; but as I now perceive, that the arguments, on which I grounded it, are erroneous, I think it my duty to point out their weakness, lest others should fall into the same mistake. I supposed, that this Epistle was written about the time of the Apostolic council in Jerusalem, mentioned in Acts xv. for the two following reasons: first, because both this Epistle was written, and that council was held with the same view, namely, to calm the uneasiness of the uncircumcised: and secondly, because Silas, who was one of the persons, which carried to Antioch the decree of the Apostolic council<sup>‡</sup>, is supposed to be the same as Silvanus, who carried the first Epistle of St. Peter<sup>¶</sup> to the Christians in Pontus, Cappadocia, &c. But these reasons are unsatisfactory. For St. Peter dates his Epistle from Babylon<sup>\*</sup>, and therefore we cannot suppose, that it was written at Jerusalem, without ascribing to the word Babylon a mystical sense, of which it is hardly capable. Besides, even if it be granted, that Silas and Silvanus are one and the same person, yet Silas could not have taken with him St. Peter's first Epistle at the time, when he carried from Jerusalem the decree of the Apostolic council. For when he carried St. Peter's first Epistle, his route was through Pontus, Cappadocia, Galatia, Asia, and Bithynia: but when Silas went from Jerusalem with the decree of the Apostolic council, he went first to Antioch, where he staid some time, and then

<sup>†</sup> See 2 Pet. i. 13, 14, 15.

<sup>‡</sup> Acts xv. 23. 27. 32.

<sup>¶</sup> 1 Pet. v. 12.

<sup>\*</sup> 1 Pet. v. 13.



then travelled through Syria and Cilicia<sup>y</sup>. Nor does he appear, when he left Jerusalem, to have had any intention of going further than Antioch<sup>z</sup>: consequently, he could not have been intrusted with an Epistle from St. Peter to the inhabitants of Pontus and Cappadocia.

On the other hand, Lardner<sup>a</sup> assigns to this Epistle too late a date, for he is of opinion, that it was written between 63 and 65. His reason for supposing, that it was not written till after 63, is, that an earlier date cannot be assigned for St. Peter's arrival in Rome. And, as he takes the word Babylon, whence St. Peter dates his Epistle, not in its proper, but in a mystical sense, as denoting Rome, he concludes, that the Epistle was not written before the time above-mentioned. But if we take Babylon in its proper sense, the argument not only proves not what Lardner intended, but proves the very reverse. For, if St. Peter's arrival in Rome is to be dated about the year 63, an Epistle, written by St. Peter in Babylon must have a date prior to that year.

<sup>y</sup> Acts xv. 30. 34. 40, 41.

<sup>z</sup> This will be evident to every one, who reads the whole passage, Acts xiv. 26—xv. 41.

<sup>a</sup> Supplement, Vol. III. Ch. 19. Sect. 4.

## S E C T. IV.

*Babylon, the place whence St. Peter dates his first Epistle, is either the ancient Babylon on the Euphrates, or Seleucia on the Tigris : but more probably the former.*

**S**T. PETER at the close of his Epistle sends a salutation from the church in Babylon<sup>b</sup>, which consequently is the place, where he wrote his Epistle. But commentators do not agree in regard to the meaning of the word Babylon, some taking it in its literal and proper sense, others giving it a figurative and mystical interpretation. Among the advocates for the latter sense have been men of such learning and abilities, that I was misled by their authority in the younger part of my life to subscribe to it: but at present, as I have more impartially examined the question, it appears to me very extraordinary, that when an Apostle dates his Epistle from Babylon, it should ever occur to any commentator to ascribe to this word a mystical meaning, instead of taking it in its literal and proper sense. For in the first century the ancient Babylon on the Euphrates was still in existence<sup>c</sup>: and there was likewise a city on the Tigris, Seleucia, not far distant from the ancient Babylon, to which the name of modern Babylon was given. But through some mistake it has been supposed,

<sup>b</sup> Ασπαζεται υμας η εν Βαβυλωνι συνεκληκτη. With συνεκληκτη we must understand εκκλησια, and not γυνη, as some commentators have done.

<sup>c</sup> The Syrian writers, of the sect of the Nestorians, according to Assemani Bibl. Orient. Tom. III. P. ii. p. 6. understand for the most part the ancient Babylon, though Asseman himself, out of partiality to the church of Rome, understands it mystically. He quotes however, as advocates of a literal interpretation, the respectable names of Erasmus, Drusius, J. Capellus, Lightfoot, Basnage, to whom may be added Beaufobre, who has most ably defended the literal interpretation in his Histoire des Manichéens, Tom. I. Liv. ii. Ch. 3. § 1. p. 181, 182.

posed, that the ancient Babylon, in the time of St. Peter, was no longer in being: and, in order to furnish a pretence for a mystical interpretation, it has been denied, that Seleucia was ever so called.

It is true, that the ancient Babylon, in comparison of its original splendor, might be called in the first century a desolated city; yet it was not wholly a heap of ruins, nor wholly destitute of inhabitants. This appears from the account, which Strabo, who lived in the time of Tiberius, has given of it: for he says<sup>d</sup>, that Alexander (who died at Babylon, and who intended, if he had lived, to have made it the place of his residence) proposed to rebuild there a large pyramid, which was a stadium in length, in breadth, and in height, but that his successors did not put the design in execution: that the Persians destroyed a part of Babylon<sup>e</sup>, and that the Macedonians neglected it: but that Babylon had suffered the most from the building of Seleucia by Seleucus Nicator, at the distance of three hundred stadia from it, because Seleucia then became the capital of the country, and Babylon was drained of its inhabitants. Strabo then adds, ‘At present Seleucia is greater than Babylon, which last city has been desolated, so that one may say of it, what the comic poet said of Megalopolis in Arcadia, “A great city is become a great desert<sup>f</sup>.”’ If this is not sufficient proof, that Babylon was still in existence in the first century, the reader may consult Cellarii Geographia, T. II. p. 747. and Assemani Bibliotheca Orientalis, T. III. P. ii. p. 7.

It will be objected perhaps, that if Babylon still existed in the time of St. Peter, it was yet in such a state of decay, that an Apostle would hardly have gone to preach the Gospel there. But I can see no reason why he should not, especially as Babylon was at that time

<sup>d</sup> Pag. 738 or 1073.

<sup>e</sup> Namely they pulled down a part of the wall.

<sup>f</sup> Ερημια μεγάλη εστιν η μεγαλη πολις.

time so far from being literally destitute of inhabitants, that Strabo draws a parallel between this city and Seleucia, saying, ‘at present Babylon is not so great as Seleucia,’ which was then the capital of the Parthian empire, and, according to Pliny, contained six hundred thousand inhabitants. To conclude therefore, that Babylon, whence St. Peter dates his Epistle, could not have been the ancient Babylon, because this city was then in a state of decay, and thence to argue, that St. Peter used the word mystically to denote Rome, is nearly the same, as if on the receipt of a letter dated from Ghent or Antwerp, in which mention was made of a Christian community there, I concluded, that because these cities are no longer what they were in the sixteenth century, the writer of the Epistle meant a spiritual Ghent or Antwerp, and that the Epistle was really written from Amsterdam.

It is therefore at least possible, that St. Peter wrote his first Epistle in the ancient Babylon on the Euphrates. But before we conclude, that he really did write there, we must first examine, whether he did not mean Seleucia on the Tigris, which was sometimes called the modern Babylon. According to Strabo, Seleucia was only three hundred stadia distant from the ancient Babylon: and it was separated by the Tigris from Ctesiphon, the winter residence of the Parthian kings. At present it is not called Bagdad, as some have supposed, which is a very different city: but, in conjunction with Ctesiphon, is named by Syrian and Arabic writers, Medinotho, Medain, Modain<sup>g</sup>, under which name it appears in D’Anville’s maps, in the latitude of  $33^{\circ} 7\frac{1}{2}'$ .

That Seleucia on the Tigris was called Babylon may be proved by several authorities. Stephanus Byzantinus,  
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<sup>g</sup> The best accounts of Modain are to be found, not in Cellarius, but in Assëmani Bibl. Orient. T. III. P. ii. p. 622—626. and in the two alphabetical indexes to the bishops’ sees, in the second volume, and the second part of the third volume.



de Urbibus<sup>h</sup>, p. 149. under the article *Βαβυλων*, says, *Βαβυλων, περσικη πολις, Μητροπολις, Σελευκεια καλεμενη*<sup>i</sup>. Sidonius Apollinaris, in his ninth poem, ver. 19, 20, 21. says,

Non coctam Babylona personabo,  
Quæ largum, fluvio patens alumno,  
Inclusum bibit hinc et inde Tigrim.

This is evidently a description of Seleucia on the one side, and of Ctesiphon on the other side of the Tigris, both which cities Sidonius includes under the name of Babylon: and the mention of the Tigris clearly shews, that he meant not the ancient Babylon on the Euphrates<sup>k</sup>. To these two authorities may be added, that

<sup>h</sup> I here quote the Amsterdam edition of 1678.

<sup>i</sup> Mosheim, who ascribes a mystical meaning to the word Babylon in the first Epistle of St. Peter, has endeavoured to destroy the force of this testimony of Stephanus Byzantinus by inverting its meaning. He supposes namely, not that the name of Babylon was given to Seleucia, but that the name of Seleucia was applied by mistake to the ancient Babylon. Now the passage certainly admits not of this interpretation, and the word *μητροπολις* clearly shews, that Stephanus did not mean the ancient Babylon on the Euphrates, which in his time was in a state of desolation.

<sup>k</sup> Mosheim argues from the epithet ‘cocta,’ that Sidonius meant the ancient Babylon, the walls of which were built, not of stone, but of brick. But this epithet may apply to Seleucia, as well as to the ancient Babylon, for according to Niebuhr, there are no stone quarries in the whole country round about Seleucia, and therefore the cities on the Tigris are in general built of brick. But even if Seleucia had been built of stone, the epithet ‘cocta’ cannot prove, that Sidonius meant a city on the Euphrates, when he expressly speaks of a city on the Tigris. It would shew nothing more, than that he was mistaken in respect to the materials of which that city was built; and that he falsely applied to the modern Babylon an epithet, which he had heard applied to the ancient Babylon, thus confounding the two cities, in the same manner as several modern geographers have confounded Babylon and Bagdad.

that of Lucan, a contemporary of St. Peter, who says, at the beginning of his *Pharsalia*,

*Cumque superba foret Babylon spolianda trophæis  
Aufoniis, umbraque erraret Crassus inulta.*

Here Lucan undoubtedly meant Seleucia on the Tigris, where the Parthian general Surena had held his triumph over Crassus: and it is self-evident, that the Roman eagles and trophies were hung up by the Parthians either at Seleucia or Ctesiphon, not in the ancient and forsaken Babylon, which the Parthians totally neglected. Lastly, in the Septuagint version, the Hebrew word, *בבל*, which denotes Ctesiphon, is rendered *Χαλαιν*, *Isaiah x. 9.* with the following addition, not found in the Hebrew, *ὁ οὐραγος οὐκ οδομένη*. Now this interpolation, though probably not made by the Greek translator himself, shews at least, that in the time of the interpolator the ancient Babylon began already to be confounded with Ctesiphon and Seleucia.

Since then the name of Babylon was actually given to Seleucia, it is not impossible, that St. Peter thus understood the word Babylon, and that his first Epistle therefore was written at Seleucia on the Tigris. But I have shewn in the preceding part of this section, that there is likewise a possibility of its having been written in Babylon, properly so called, or in the ancient Babylon on the Euphrates. The question therefore is, which of these two senses shall we ascribe to the word Babylon? for one of these two we must ascribe to it, unless we give it, without any reason, a mystical interpretation. In the two last editions of this Introduction, I preferred the former sense: but after a more mature consideration I think it much more probable at present, that St. Peter meant the ancient Babylon. It is true, that Lucan, Sidonius Apollinaris, and Stephanus Byzantinus gave the name of Babylon to Seleucia. But the two last of these writers lived so late as the fifth century,  
and

and therefore their authority is perhaps not sufficient to prove, that Seleucia was called Babylon in the first century. Lucan indeed was a contemporary of St. Peter: but then he uses this word in an epic poem, in which a writer is not bound by the same rules, as in prose: and it is not improbable, that he selected the word Babylon, partly because its celebrity added to the pomp of his diction, and partly because neither Ctesiphon nor Seleucia would have suited the verse. The writer of an Epistle, on the contrary, can allow himself no such latitude, and perspicuity requires, that in the date of his Epistle, he should use no other name for the town, where he writes, than that which properly belongs to it. If therefore St. Peter had really written at Seleucia, he would hardly have called this city by the name of Babylon, though this name was sometimes applied to it. Consequently, it is most probable, that St. Peter wrote his first Epistle in the ancient Babylon on the Euphrates<sup>1</sup>.

Before I conclude this section I must take notice of a passage in Josephus, which not only confutes all notions of a spiritual or mystical Babylon, but throws a great light on the whole of our present inquiry. And this passage is of so much the more importance, because Josephus was an historian, who lived in the same age with St. Peter, and the passage itself relates to an event, which took place thirty-six years before the Christian era, namely, the delivery of Hyrcanus, the Jewish high priest, from imprisonment, by order of Phraates, king of Parthia, with permission to reside in Babylon, where there was a considerable number of Jews. This is recorded by Josephus, *Antiquit. XV. 2. 2.* in the following

<sup>1</sup> On the supposition, that the ancient Babylon did not exist when St. Peter wrote, it has been conjectured, that he meant, not the city, but the province of Babylon. But since the supposition is ungrounded, there is no necessity for having recourse to this conjecture, which is very improbable, because, if St. Peter had meant the province, and not the city, he would not have written *εν Βαβυλωνι*, but *εν Βαβυλωνια*.

following words, Δια τετο δεσμων μεν αφηκεν, εν Βαβυλωνι δε καταγισθαι παρειχεν, ενθα και πληθος ην Ιουδαιων. Josephus then adds, that both the Jews in Babylon, and all, who dwelt in that country as far as the Euphrates<sup>m</sup>, respected Hyrcanus, as high priest, and king. Now the word Babylon in this passage of Josephus, evidently means a city in the east, and it cannot possibly be interpreted in a mystical manner either of Jerusalem or of Rome. The only question is, whether he meant the ancient Babylon on the Euphrates, or Seleucia on the Tigris. The former is the most obvious interpretation, and it is warranted by the circumstance, that in other places, where Josephus speaks of Seleucia on the Tigris, he calls it by its real and proper name, Seleucia<sup>n</sup>.

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## S E C T. V.

*Confutation of the arguments alleged in favour of a mystical interpretation of the word Babylon.*

THE first argument in favour of a mystical, and against a literal, interpretation of the word Babylon, is, that in the whole country of Babylonia there were no Jews in the time of St. Peter<sup>o</sup>: and thence it is inferred, that he could not have gone to preach the Gospel there. Now in this argument both the premises and the inference are false. The inference is false,

<sup>m</sup> Μεχρις Ευφρατη. This expression does not imply, that the Babylon, of which Josephus speaks, did not lie on the Euphrates. He writes here, in reference rather to the situation of the Parthian empire, than to the situation of Judæa.

▪ For instance, Antiquit. Lib. XVIII. C. 2. § 4. C. 9. § 8, 9.

• This is asserted by Pearson in his Opera posthuma.



false, because, even if there had been no Jews in the whole country of Babylonia, St. Peter might have gone to preach the Gospel there: for he preached to the uncircumcited at Cæsarea<sup>p</sup>, and he himself declared, that it was ordained by God, ‘that the Gentiles by his mouth should hear the word of the Gospel, and believe<sup>q</sup>.’ The premises themselves likewise are totally ungrounded: for, if we except Palestine, there was no country in the world, where the Jews were so numerous and so powerful, as in the province of Babylonia, in which they had their two celebrated seats of learning, Nehardea and Sura.

It is true, that Josephus mentions a cruel massacre of the Jews in Seleucia, which happened about forty years after the birth of Christ: but whoever attentively reads the whole relation of Josephus must perceive, that this massacre by no means extirpated the Jews of that country, and that the effect, which it had in the province of Babylonia, was rather an augmentation than a diminution of their number. This relation is given in the last chapter of the eighteenth book of his Antiquities: and the following is an extract from it.

It was the custom of the Jews, who lived in the east, to deposit their half shekel, and other offerings destined for the temple, in the fortified cities of Nisibis, and Nehardea, whence they were annually transported to Jerusalem, under a safe convoy, on account of the bands of robbers, which infested the country. In the latter of these two cities, which, from its situation on the Euphrates, was almost impregnable, Asinæus and Anilæus, two Jews, who were brothers, and had been ill treated by their heathen masters, put themselves at the head of a gang of robbers, and by degrees made themselves masters of the place. In this situation they continued, subject indeed to the kings of Parthia, but very troublesome to their neighbours: till at last they were defeated in a war, which they had undertaken against the Parthian governor of an ancient district.

From

<sup>p</sup> Acts x.

<sup>q</sup> Acts xv. 7.

From this time Anilæus had again recourse to robbery, and infested with his depredations the province of Babylonia. Upon this, the Babylonians demanded of the Jews in Nehardea, that Anilæus should be delivered up to them: which the Nehardeans refusing, the Babylonians attacked Anilæus in his camp<sup>r</sup>, defeated and killed him. The Jews being now the weaker party were exposed to numerous inconveniences: and accordingly they, who lived in the neighbourhood of Nehardea<sup>s</sup>, retired to Seleucia, where they remained five years in security. Their numbers being now very considerable in Seleucia, they began to be very troublesome: and having interfered in a dispute between the Syrian and Greek inhabitants of the place, they were attacked by both parties, and a massacre ensued, in which fifty thousand Jews lost their lives. This massacre, according to the relation of Josephus, must have happened a short time before the death of Caligula, that is, about the year 40 of the Christian era, and not long before the events recorded in the twelfth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. They, who escaped, retreated to Ctesiphon, which was separated from Seleucia by the Tigris; but not finding themselves safe even here, they fled, though it is uncertain in what year, to Nisibis and Nehardea, where the strength of these cities, and the bravery of the inhabitants, afforded them that protection, which they could not obtain elsewhere. Hence it appears, that Nehardea constantly remained in the possession of the Jews: and, as only a part of these had retired out of Babylonia to Seleucia, on the death of Anilæus, so it is probable, that after the

<sup>r</sup> It must be particularly noted, that this happened in the camp of Anilæus, not in the town of Nehardea.

<sup>s</sup> The Jews, who lived in the town, did not leave it, for it appears from the sequel, that Nehardea still remained in their possession. Nor did all the Jews, who lived in the neighbouring district, go away: for Josephus relates, that between five and six years afterwards another colony of Jews retreated out of Babylonia to Seleucia on account of the plague.

the massacre in Seleucia, such of them, as were on good terms with the heathen inhabitants, did not return again to Babylonia. At any rate this account of Josephus clearly shews, that even after the massacre, the number of Jews in this country was very considerable: and so far from proving what Pearson asserts, that there were no Jews remaining in the province of Babylonia, when St. Peter wrote, it proves the very reverse. Besides, as St. Peter, at least according to my calculation, wrote his first Epistle twenty years after this massacre, the Jewish population in Babylonia, however greatly it might have suffered, must, in the mean time, have acquired an augmentation. Lastly, it must be observed that in this whole history, no mention whatever is made of any misfortunes, which befel the Jews in the city of Babylon on the Euphrates: and therefore the opinion, that St. Peter wrote his first Epistle there, would not be affected, even if it could be shewn, that the Jews in Seleucia, Ctesiphon, Nisibis, and Nehardea were wholly extirpated.

The second argument in favour of a mystical interpretation of the word Babylon, is, that almost all the ancient fathers have explained it in this manner, and have asserted that St. Peter used it, to denote Rome. But we must recollect, that an assertion of this kind, is not testimony to a fact, but mere matter of opinion, in which the ancients were as liable to mistake, as we are. Nor is it true, that all the ancient ecclesiastical writers have ascribed to the word Babylon a mystical meaning: for though the Greek and Latin fathers commonly understand Rome, yet the Syriac and Arabic writers understand it literally, as denoting a town in the East. And, if we are to be guided by opinion, an oriental writer is surely as good authority on the present question, as an European.

The third objection, on which Lardner particularly insists, is, that in the accounts, which we have on record relative to St. Peter's history, no mention is made of a journey to Babylon. Now this argument would prove nothing, even if our knowledge of St. Peter's life and



transactions were more perfect than it really is. Let us suppose an instance of some eminent man in modern times, in the history of whose life no mention is made, that during his travels he paid a visit to Vienna: but that among his letters to his friends, one of them, notwithstanding the silence of his biographer, is dated from Vienna. In this case, unless we had reason to suppose, either that the whole Epistle was a forgery, or that the author had used a false date, we should immediately conclude on the bare authority of this single Epistle, that he had actually been at Vienna; and we should hardly think of a mystical or spiritual Vienna. Lardner himself has argued in this very manner, with respect to St. Paul, though St. Paul's history is infinitely better known, than that of St. Peter: and has inferred from the single passage, Tit. i. 5. 'for this cause left I thee in Crete,' that St. Paul made a voyage to Crete in the year 56, though this voyage is mentioned neither by St. Luke, nor by any other historian. No reason therefore can be assigned why we should refuse to argue in the same manner, with respect to St. Peter. In fact, Lardner's argument could no where have been more unfortunately applied, than in the present instance. From the time of the Apostolic council at Jerusalem<sup>t</sup>, in the year 49, at which St. Peter was present, till the time of his arrival in Rome, which Lardner acknowledges was not before 63, there is an interval of fourteen years, during which we have no history of him whatsoever<sup>u</sup>. How then can we form a judgement of his transactions during this period, except from his own writings? And how can the silence of history in respect to his journey to Babylon afford an argument that he never was there, in contradiction to his

<sup>t</sup> Acts xv. After this chapter, the name of St. Peter does not once occur in the Acts of the Apostles.

<sup>u</sup> Lardner himself says, in his Supplement, Vol. III. Ch. xviii. Sect. 4. 'we have no where any very distinct account of this Apostle's travels.' And soon afterwards he says, 'The books of the New Testament afford no light for determining, where St. Peter was for several years after that.'



his own Epistle, when the real fact is, we have no history at all of St. Peter during this period? We cannot therefore talk of its silence in respect to any one particular transaction, since every transaction of St. Peter throughout the whole of this interval is left unrecorded. Lardner indeed conjectures, as the Epistle is addressed to the inhabitants of Pontus, Galatia, &c. that St. Peter spent a part of this time in these countries, though he denies that St. Peter ever was in Babylon, whence the Epistle is dated. Now this mode of arguing is nearly the same, as if I concluded from a letter dated from Vienna, and addressed to a person in Venice, that the writer of that letter had been in Venice, but not, that he ever was at Vienna. Lardner supposes also, that St. Peter spent a part of this time in Jerusalem. Now it is impossible for us to determine, what stay St. Peter made in Jerusalem after the holding of the Apostolic council, or whether he remained at all there. But this I think is certain, that he was not at Jerusalem, when St. Paul returned thither for the last time, since St. Luke makes particular mention of St. James, and describes him as the head of the Christian community in Jerusalem, but says nothing of St. Peter, whom he would hardly have passed over in total silence, if St. Peter had been there. Now St. Paul's last visit to Jerusalem happened in the year 60: and since I have shewn in the third section of this chapter, that the first Epistle of St. Peter was written about this time, it is not at all improbable, that St. Peter, who was absent from Jerusalem, was then engaged in preaching the Gospel to the Babylonians.

The last argument in favour of the opinion that the Babylon, where St. Peter wrote, was not Babylon properly so called, is derived from ch. ii. 13. where St. Peter commands obedience 'to the king,' and from ch. ii. 17. where he says, 'honour the king.' Hence Lardner\* concludes,

\* Acts xxii. xxiii.

\* Supplement, Vol. III. Ch. xix. § 3. n. 3. This argument is peculiar to Lardner.

concludes, that St. Peter must have written in a place, which was subject to the same king or emperor, as the people to which he sent his Epistle. But these were subject to the Roman emperor; whereas Babylon with its whole territory was then subject not to the Romans, but to the Parthians, and therefore according to Lardner could not have been the place, where St. Peter wrote. Now this argument rests on a supposition, which is contradicted by the common usage of every language: the expression 'the king' in a letter from a person in one country to a person in another country, may according to circumstances denote the king, to which the reader is subject, as well as the king, to which the writer is subject.

It appears then, that the arguments, which have been alleged, to shew that St. Peter did not write his first Epistle in the country of Babylonia, are devoid of foundation: and consequently the notion of a mystical Babylon, as denoting either Jerusalem or Rome, loses its whole support<sup>y</sup>. For in itself the notion is highly improbable, and therefore the bare possibility, that St. Peter took a journey to Babylon properly so called, renders it inadmissible. The plain language of epistolary writing does not admit of the figures of poetry: and though it would be very allowable in a poem written in honour of Göttingen to style it another Athens, yet if a professor of this University, should in a letter written from Göttingen, date it Athens, it would be a greater piece of pedantry, than ever was laid to the charge of the learned. In like manner,

<sup>y</sup> For the same reason the opinion that St. Peter meant a small town in Egypt, of the name of Babylon, loses likewise its support: for, if there is no ground for the supposition, that St. Peter did not write either in the neighbourhood of the Tigris or of the Euphrates, we can have no authority for the conjecture, that he wrote in an insignificant town in Egypt. Indeed, very few have adopted it, except the Coptic Christians, who believe that St. Peter wrote this Epistle in Egypt, because he sends a salutation from St. Mark, whom they claim as their Apostle and patron. See Wanleb nouvelle relation d' un voyage fait en Egypte, p. 132. and p. 118. of his manuscript preserved in the library of the University of Göttingen.

manner, though a figurative use of the word Babylon is not unsuitable to the animated and poetical language of the Apocalypse, yet St. Peter in a plain and unadorned Epistle would hardly have called the place, where he wrote, by any other appellation than that, which literally and properly belonged to it<sup>2</sup>.

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## SECT. VI.

*Of the contents, and the design of this Epistle.*

THE object of this Epistle is assigned by St. Peter himself, ch. v. 12. where he says, ‘ I have written briefly, exhorting, and testifying, that this is the true grace of God, wherein ye stand.’ But I have shewn in the first section of this chapter, that the persons, to whom he wrote, were uncircumcised Jewish proselytes, who had received the Christian faith. St. Peter wrote therefore to convince his readers, that, though they were of gentile origin, and had not been circumcised, they stood in the grace of God, as well as the Jewish and circumcised converts to Christianity.

The manner, in which St. Peter has treated this question, is very different from that of St. Paul. For he has  
not

<sup>2</sup> Whoever wishes to know what commentators have defended the mystical interpretation of the word Babylon may consult Lardner’s Supplement, Vol. III. Ch. xix.. Lardner himself has defended this interpretation, and also Mosheim, in his preface to Walther’s Exposition of the Epistle. It was likewise adopted by most of the Greek and Latin fathers, and is still received by most members of the church of Rome, because they consider St. Peter as their head, and therefore seek for arguments to prove, that he spent some time among them. Hardouin explains Babylon of Jerusalem: and according to Asseman (Bib. Or. T. III. P. II. p. 7.) it was the opinion of certain Syrians, that St. Peter wrote his first Epistle, not only in Jerusalem, but in the very room, where the Apostles first received the gifts of the Holy Ghost.

not divided his Epistle into two distinct parts, the one doctrinal, the other practical, as St. Paul has usually done: but has interwoven the doctrines with the exhortations. This remarkable difference in their modes of thinking and writing deserves particularly to be noted. Several adversaries of Christianity have asserted, that St. Peter's doctrine, in respect to the Levitical law, was not the same with that of St. Paul, and that St. Peter maintained the necessity of this law even for the heathens. Now this assertion is not only contradicted by what we read of St. Peter in the Acts of the Apostles, but more especially by the very contents of his own Epistle. In order therefore to support it with any colour of argument, the first step must be to deny that the Epistle is genuine. It is true, that no one has hitherto had recourse to this pretext: but lest any one should have recourse to it in future, and even contend that St. Paul himself wrote this Epistle in St. Peter's name in order to remove all suspicion of a difference in their doctrines, I have thought it not unnecessary to shew that St. Paul's manner is totally different from that, which is observable in the first Epistle of St. Peter.

Another object, which St. Peter had in view, according to what he says, ch. v. 12. was, to exhort. Now the exhortations, which occur in this Epistle, beside some occasional admonitions on idolatry and other heathen vices, may be reduced to the three following classes.

1. To patience in misfortunes; whence we may conclude that the Christians in Asia Minor were then in affliction: and in this respect the object of St. Peter's first Epistle agrees with that of St. James. These exhortations to patience St. Peter has not arranged systematically, but has introduced them in various places, as opportunities offered, namely, ch. i. 6—11. ii. 21—25. iii. 14.—iv. 7. iv. 12—19. v. 7—11. St. Paul would have placed them more methodically.

2. To avoid whatever might give just offence to the magistrates and their fellow citizens, and might confirm the



the slanderous reports of their adversaries. St. Peter speaks of slander in more than one place of this Epistle; and he seems to have apprehended, that the magistrates would make an enquiry into the conduct of the Christians. He advises them therefore to be on their guard, to pay particular attention to their own conduct, that they, who spoke evil of them, might be put to silence. He enforces the duty of men towards the magistrates, and of wives towards their husbands; and recommends to the wives, whose husbands were yet unbelievers, not to convert them by disputation, but to win them by their own good conduct. Hence we may conclude, that one of the evil reports, which St. Peter wished principally to remove, was, that the Christian religion contributed to excite sedition on the part of the men, and to cause disobedience on the part of the wives. The exhortations on this subject are delivered likewise in detached parts of the Epistle, namely, ch. ii. 12—20. iii. 1—13. iv. 14—16. v. 7—9. In this last passage the word *διαβολος* denotes not ‘devil,’ but ‘calumniator.’

3. To brotherly love. This exhortation is principally given in ch. i. 22—ii. 10. and St. Peter enforces it by representing to his readers, that ‘they were born again, not of corruptible, but of incorruptible seed, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever:’ and that they were a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation. But a similar exhortation occurs again, ch. iv. 8—11.

## S E C T. VII.

*Of St. Peter's mode of writing, and the peculiarities of his Greek style.*

**T**HIS is a subject of some importance, because a knowledge of the peculiarities in the language of St. Peter's first Epistle will best enable us to determine, whether the second Epistle, the authenticity of which has been called in question, was written by the same author or not.

St. Peter frequently quotes the Old Testament, according to the text of the Septuagint, and that, even in places, where the Septuagint does not exactly express the sense of the Hebrew: for instance, ch. ii. 6. 9. iv. 18<sup>a</sup>. He has borrowed likewise thoughts and expressions from the Septuagint in several passages, where he has not made a formal quotation, as in ch. iii. 6. which he borrowed from Prov. iii. 25. and in ch. v. 7. which he borrowed from Psalm liv. 23. I have thought it the more necessary to make this remark, because though St. Paul, or St. Luke, or St. John, even without a comparison of their quotations with the Hebrew and Greek texts, might be expected to have chiefly used the latter, yet of St. Peter it might be supposed before an actual comparison had taken place, that he was not conversant with the Greek Bible.

Secondly, in the structure of his periods St. Peter has this peculiarity, that he is fond of beginning a sentence in such a manner, that it shall refer to a principal word in the preceding. Wetstein in his note to 1 Peter i. 4. has very justly said, *Observant interpretes, Petrum, quod et Johannes in initio evangelii facit, ita sermonem suum ordinare, ut membrum sequens ex præcedentis sine inchoet, et cum eo connectat.* 4. εἰς ὑμᾶς. 5. τῆς — φερεμένης — ἐν καρτῇ ἐσχατῇ. 6. ἐν ᾧ. 7. — Ἰησοῦ χριστοῦ. 8. ὁν οὐκ εἶδοτες.

<sup>a</sup> This last passage must be compared with Prov. xi. 31.

εἰδοτες. 9.—σωτηριαν ψυχων. 10. περι ἧς σωτηριας—προφητευσαντες. 11. ερευνωντες. The consequence of this structure is, that the sentences, instead of being rounded, according to the manner of the Greeks, are drawn out to a great length: and in many places, where we should expect, that a sentence would be closed, a new clause is attached, and another again to this, so that, before the whole period comes to an end, it contains parts, which, at the commencement of the period, do not appear to have been designed for it. St. Paul, though he was likewise inattentive to his style, and frequently extends his periods by the insertion of parentheses, yet, if we except the Epistles to the Ephesians<sup>b</sup> and Colossians, he has not injured the rotundity of his periods by such an addition of clause to clause.

Thirdly, St. Peter has made use of several words, which do not frequently occur in other parts of the New Testament: for instance:

*Ανασροφη*, and *ανασρεφομαι*, taken in a moral sense, ch. i. 15. 17. 18. ii. 12. iii. 1. 2. 16. It is true that *ανασροφη* occurs sometimes in other parts of the New Testament: but the frequent use of it in one short Epistle distinguishes St. Peter from the other writers of the New Testament.

*Επισκοπος* is used by St. Peter, not in the sense of ‘bishop,’ but in that of ‘shepherd,’ or ‘pastor,’ ch. ii. 25. The translation of *επισκοπου των ψυχων υμων*, by ‘bishop of your souls,’ is surely improper; for the expression ‘bishop of our souls’ would imply that there was such a thing, as bishop of our bodies. The Hebrew verb *רעה* denoting both pavit, and curavit, St. Peter appears to have used *επισκοπος* in the same latitude, as corresponding to the participle *רעה*, and as denoting both ‘shepherd’ and ‘guardian.’ In like manner he appears to have used the verb *επισκοπεω* in the sense of pascō.

*Αι αρεται*, is used by St. Peter to denote ‘praise,’ in the same manner, as it is frequently used in the Septuagint<sup>c</sup>.

*Αμαραντος*

<sup>b</sup> See above, Ch. xx. Sect. 5.

<sup>c</sup> See for instance Isaiah xlii. 8. 12. xliii. 21. Habak. iii. 3.

Ἀμαραντες and ἀμαραντινος occur in no other part of the New Testament, than the first Epistle of St. Peter. In the whole Septuagint likewise the latter is not used, and the former in only one instance.

Ἐπερωτημα, ch. iii. 21. is used in no other place, either in the New Testament, or in the Septuagint. But it is once used by Theodotion in his Greek version of Daniel, ch. iv. 14.

Κοσμος, ch. v. 9. appears to be used in a sense very different from its usual one: for if we translate it ‘world’ the meaning of the passage will be, ‘it happens in the world, as it happens to you in Asia Minor, which sounds rather strange. Perhaps in the East, the term ‘world’ was used to denote the Parthian Empire, as in the West it denoted the Roman Empire.

## CHAP. XXVIII.

### OF THE SECOND EPISTLE OF ST. PETER.

#### SECT. I.

#### *Of the authenticity of this Epistle.*

**T**HIS Epistle, as appears from ch. iii. 1. was written to the same communities as the first Epistle: and the author thus gives us to understand, that he was the person who wrote the first Epistle, that is, the Apostle Peter. He calls himself likewise, ch. i. 1. Συμεων Πετρος, δαλος και αποστολος Ιησου Χριστου: and ch. i. 16—18. says, that he was present at the transfiguration of Christ on the mount. The notion therefore entertained by Grotius, that this Epistle was written by a bishop of Jerusalem,



lem, of the name of Simeon, is absolutely inadmissible. And we have no other alternative than this: either it was written by the Apostle St. Peter, or it is a forgery in his name.

The ancients entertained very great doubts, whether St. Peter was really the author. Eusebius, in the chapter<sup>d</sup> where he speaks of the books of the New Testament in general, reckons it among the *αντιλεγόμενα*. He says that tradition does not reckon, as a part of the New Testament, the second Epistle ascribed to Peter: but that, as in the opinion of most men, it is useful, it is therefore much read. Origen had said long before (as quoted, Euseb. H. E. VI. 25.) that Peter had left behind him one Epistle universally received; and perhaps a second, though doubts were entertained about it. Writers of the fifth and following centuries, or the decrees of councils, I think it unnecessary to quote, especially as they have been already quoted by Lardner.

The old Syriac version, though it contains the Epistle of St. James, which Eusebius likewise reckons among the *αντιλεγόμενα*, does not contain the second Epistle of St. Peter. Now it cannot be said, that the other books of the New Testament were translated into Syriac before St. Peter's second Epistle was written; for St. Paul's second Epistle to Timothy was written certainly as late<sup>e</sup>, and yet is contained in this very version. And if an Epistle addressed only to an individual was known to the Syriac translator, it may be thought that a circular Epistle, addressed to communities dispersed in several countries in Asia, would hardly have escaped his notice. The circumstance therefore, that the old Syriac translator did not translate the second Epistle of St. Peter, as well as the first, may be used as an argument against its antiquity, and, of course, against its authenticity. However, we must not immediately conclude, that the Syrian church condemned this

Epistle

<sup>d</sup> Hist. Eccles. Lib. III. cap. 25.

<sup>e</sup> The Gospel of St. John, which is likewise in the Syrian canon, was written still later.



It appears then, that, if the authenticity of this Epistle, were to be determined by external evidence, it would have less in its favour, than it would have against it. But, on the other hand, the internal evidence is greatly in its favour, and indeed so much so, that the Epistle gains in this respect more, than it loses in the former. Wetstein indeed says, that since the ancients themselves were in doubt, the moderns cannot expect to arrive at certainty, because we cannot obtain more information on the subject, in the eighteenth, than ecclesiastical writers were able to obtain in the third and fourth centuries. Now this is perfectly true, as far as relates to historical knowledge, or to the testimony of others, in regard to the matter of fact, whether St. Peter was the author or not. But when this question is to be decided by an examination of the Epistle itself, it is surely possible, that the critical skill and penetration of the moderns may discover in it proofs of its having been written by St. Peter, though these proofs escaped the notice of the ancients.

After a diligent comparison of the first Epistle of St. Peter with that, which is ascribed to him as his second, the agreement between them appears to me to be such, that, if the second was not written by St. Peter, as well as the first, the person, who forged it, not only possessed the power of imitation in a very unusual degree, but understood likewise the design of the first Epistle, with which the ancients do not appear to have been acquainted. Now, if this be true, the supposition that the second Epistle was not written by St. Peter himself involves a contradiction. Nor is it credible, that a pious impostor of the first or second century should have imitated St. Peter so successfully as to betray no marks of a forgery: for the spurious productions of those ages, which were sent into the world under the name of Apostles, are for the most part very unhappy imitations, and discover very evident marks, that they were not written by the persons, to whom they were ascribed. Other productions of this kind betray their  
origin

origin by the poverty of their materials, or by the circumstance, that instead of containing original thoughts, they are nothing more than a rhapsody of sentiments collected from various parts of the Bible, and put together without plan or order. This charge cannot possibly be laid to the second Epistle of St. Peter, which is so far from containing materials derived from other parts of the Bible, that the third chapter exhibits the discussion of a totally new subject. Its resemblance to the Epistle of St. Jude will be hardly urged, as an argument against it : for no doubt can be made, that the second Epistle of St. Peter was, in respect to the Epistle of St. Jude, the original, and not the copy. Lastly, it is extremely difficult even for a man of the greatest talents, to forge a writing in the name of another, without sometimes inserting, what the pretended author either would not, or could not have said ; and to support the imposture in so complete a manner, as to militate in not a single instance, either against his character, or against the age, in which he lived. Now in the second Epistle of St. Peter, though it has been a subject of examination full seventeen hundred years, nothing has hitherto been discovered, which is unsuitable, either to the Apostle, or to the Apostolic age. Objections indeed have been made on account of its style : but these objections I shall presently answer, and shew that the style of the second Epistle, when compared with that of the first, warrants rather the conclusion, that both were written by the same person. We have no reason therefore to believe, that the second Epistle of St. Peter is spurious, especially as it is difficult to comprehend what motive could have induced a Christian, whether orthodox, or heretic, to attempt the fabrication of such an Epistle, and then falsely ascribe it to St. Peter.

Having shewn, that the supposition, that this Epistle is spurious, is without foundation, I have in the next place to shew, that there are positive grounds for believing it to be genuine. The arguments in favour of



its genuineness are of two kinds, being founded on the similarity of the two Epistles, either in respect to their materials, or in respect to their style. The arguments of the former kind are as follow :

1. The design of the first Epistle was to assure the uncircumcised Christians, that they stood in the grace of God, as I have shewn in the preceding chapter. Now it was not generally known, that this was the design of it, and therefore we cannot suppose, that any person, whose object was to forge an Epistle in St. Peter's name, should have observed it. But the design of the second Epistle was certainly the same as that of the first, as appears from the address, ch. i. 1. Τοις ισοτιμον ἡμιν λαχουσι πισιν εν δικαιοσυνη τῃ Θεῳ. If we explain ἡμιν as denoting 'us Apostles,' the address will imply what was wholly unnecessary, since no one could doubt that the faith of other Christians might be as good, as the faith of the Apostles: and it will sound likewise rather haughty and assuming. But if we explain ἡμιν as denoting 'us who were born Jews,' and consider, that the second Epistle, as well as the first, was directed to persons who were born heathens, the address becomes clear and consistent. Δικαιοσυνη τῃ Θεῳ will then signify 'the impartiality of God' in estimating the faith of native heathens as highly as the faith of native Jews, which St. Peter has extolled in other places<sup>i</sup>. We shall likewise be able to explain ch. i. 8—10. which appears to contain the tautology, that they who are diligent in good works, are not idle: whereas, if this Epistle be explained from the design of the first, we shall perceive the meaning of the passage to be this; that they, who are diligent in good works, need not fear the reproach, that they observe not the Levitical law, since their good works, which are the fruits of their religious knowledge, will make their calling and election sure.

The deluge, which is not a common subject in the Apostolic Epistles, is mentioned both in 1 Pet. iii. 20. and in 2 Pet. ii. 5. and in both places the circumstance

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<sup>i</sup> Acts x. 34, 35. xv. 8, 9. 1 Pet. i. 17.

is noted, that eight persons only were saved, though, in neither place does the subject require that the number should be particularly specified. Now it is true that St. Peter was not the only Apostle, who knew how many persons were saved in the ark: but he only, who by habit had acquired a familiarity with the subject, would ascertain the precise number, where his argument did not depend upon it.

3. The author of the first Epistle had read St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, as I have shewn in the second section of the preceding chapter: and the author of the second Epistle speaks in express terms, ch. iii. 15, 16. of the Epistles of St. Paul. Now no other writer of the New Testament has quoted from the New Testament: consequently we have in these Epistles a criterion, from which we may judge that they were written by the same author.

Before I consider the arguments which are derived from the style of these Epistles, I must observe that several commentators have, on the contrary, contended that the style is very different, and hence have inferred that they were written by different authors. Jerom likewise, in his treatise on Illustrious Men, says that on this very account it was believed, that the second Epistle was not written by St. Peter. Now I will not deny that the style of the second Epistle in some places, especially in the second chapter, is somewhat different from the style of the first Epistle: but if they agree in other places, these exceptions will not prove, that the Epistles were not written by the same author. It is extremely difficult to form from a single Epistle so complete a judgement of the author's style and manner, as to enable us to pronounce with certainty, that he was not the author of another Epistle, which is ascribed to him. The style of the same writer is not always the same at every period of his life, especially when he composes, not in his native, but in a foreign language. Let us examine however in what the difference between these Epistles consists.

Camerarius,

Camerarius, in his note on 1 Pet. v. 12. says of the first Epistle, Hoc dissimulandum non putavimus, hanc epistolam bonis et significantibus verbis refertam, atque adeo ipsam compositionem ejusmodi esse, quæ, ut in neglectione hujus studii, præclara videri possit; ut diligenter et accurate istam epistolam perscriptam esse appareat. But of the second Epistle he says in his note on 2 Pet. i. 3. Sunt autem in hac epistola et verba, et figuræ sermonis ejusmodi in plerisque locis, ut sententia ambigua atque obscura reddatur, magis quam uspiam alibi in scriptis apostolicis. Now every one will allow that on this subject Camerarius was a competent judge, and I readily grant that he had some foundation for his censure of the second Epistle, in the place where he has given it, namely in ch. i. 1—7. But he has carried the matter too far in adding ‘in plerisque locis,’ and in extending his censure to the whole Epistle. For after the 12th verse of ch. i. to the end of the Epistle, the words are very intelligible, and very properly chosen: and in respect to the structure of the periods, the passage<sup>k</sup> ch. ii. 4—10. is more judiciously arranged and is better rounded, than any sentence of the same length in the first Epistle. If there is any obscurity in it, this must be ascribed partly to our own want of knowledge, because, the erroneous doctrines combated in the second chapter are not sufficiently understood, and partly to the circumstance, that the author has not given us to understand, till toward the close of the Epistle, that he wrote against the deniers of a day of judgement. But this very circumstance affords a strong argument, that both Epistles were written by the same author: for in the first Epistle likewise the purport of it is not declared before the end of the last chapter<sup>l</sup>, so that the demonstration precedes the proposition, whence this Epistle also was not thoroughly understood even by Camerarius, though he thought it perfectly intelligible.

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<sup>k</sup> This passage ends with the word κατὰφρονοντας ver. 10.—Τολμητας begins a new sentence.

<sup>l</sup> Ch. v. 13.



With respect to the passage in the second Epistle, ch. i. 3. where Camerarius complains, and not wholly without foundation, of obscurity, it may be observed that Alberti's remarks on it have rendered it less obscure than it appeared to Camerarius, and that the difficulty, which attends it, is owing to the two following causes :

1. To the reading *δια δοξης και αρετης*, which is that of our common printed editions, and for which Camerarius did not know that there was a better. But since his time, it has been discovered that very good authorities, instead of this reading, have *ιδια δοξη και αρετη*. Now if we adopt the latter reading, and construe in the following manner, 'through the knowledge of God in his glory,' we shall no longer have reason to complain of obscurity.

2. To the circumstance, that the same word *αρετη* is used, ver. 3. and ver. 5. in two different senses, and that its common meaning 'virtue' is applicable in neither place. But this very word is used likewise in the first Epistle in a peculiar sense, though few commentators have observed it; and consequently the obscurity, which attends *αρετη*, 2 Pet. i. 3. is rather an argument, that both Epistles were written by the same person. In 2 Pet. i. 5. this favourite word of St. Peter signifies 'glory;' and ver. 5. it denotes 'courage,' especially that kind of courage, which must attend the faith of a true Christian, but which at the same time must be accompanied with knowledge, that they, who possess it, may not become undaunted martyrs of error and prejudice.

Thus, in answering the objections, which have been made to the style of the second Epistle, I have likewise shewn some instances of agreement with that of the first. To these may be added the following :

1. The sentences in the second Epistle are seldom fluent and well rounded, but have the same extension as those in the first.

2. *Αναστροφη*, the word so peculiar to the first Epistle, occurs likewise in the second<sup>m</sup>, though not so frequently

as

<sup>m</sup> Ch. ii. 7. iii. 11.



as in the former. On the other hand we sometimes find in the second Epistle repetitions of the same word, which betray a poverty of language: for instance ἐπιχρησιν, ch. i. 5. 11. σπυδαζω, ch. i. 10. 15.

From what has been said in the course of this section, it appears, that even the second chapter of the second Epistle has some resemblance, both in its style and its contents, to the first Epistle. This is particularly to be noted, because even the advocates for the second Epistle have in general granted, that the style of this chapter is not the usual style of St. Peter. Bishop Sherlock for instance acknowledges it: nor, though I contend that there is some similarity, as in ver. 5. 7., will I assert that there is no difference. But it will not therefore follow that the whole Epistle was not written by St. Peter: and if it is allowable to draw a conclusion from one or two pages, it will be no other than this, that the second chapter is spurious, because the style of it is said to be as different from the first and third chapters, as it is from the first Epistle. This conclusion however no one will draw, who has examined the connexion of the whole Epistle<sup>a</sup>. In fact the difference in question is rather of a negative kind: for though I am unable to discover any remarkable agreement in style between the first Epistle and the second chapter of the second Epistle, I do not perceive any remarkable difference. This second chapter has indeed several words, which are unusual in other parts of the New Testament: but the same may be said of the first Epistle. And some of the expressions, which to us appear extraordinary, were borrowed perhaps from the Gnostics, whose doctrines are here confuted: for it is not unusual, in combating the opinions of a particular sect, to adopt their peculiar terms. Thus in 2 Pet. ii. 17. the Gnostics are called ‘clouds agitated by a tempest:’ and we know that the Manicheans, who had many doctrines in common with the Gnostics, taught that there were five good, and five bad elements, and that  
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<sup>a</sup> This subject will be particularly examined in the last section of this chapter.

one of the latter was called ‘tempest’. In like manner, they frequently speak of darkness under the name of *Zoφos*, which occurs more than once in this chapter. The Epistle of St. Jude has a still greater number of unusual figurative expressions; and it is not impossible, that these also were borrowed from the Gnostics.

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## S E C T. II.

*Of the time, when this Epistle was written.*

**T**HE second Epistle of St. Peter must have been written only a short time before his death: for he says, ch. i. 14. ‘shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me.’ St. Peter here alludes to his conversation with Christ after the resurrection, recorded in John xxi. 18—22. where Christ had foretold his death in the following words, ‘when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not.’ Hence St. Peter might very easily conclude, that he would not survive the coming of Christ to judge Jerusalem. But Christ has declared that Jerusalem would be destroyed before one generation passed away. St. Peter therefore after a lapse of thirty years, that is in the year 64, necessarily considered his death, as an event not far distant.

On the place, where this Epistle was written I say nothing: for it is wholly uncertain, whether St. Peter wrote it before, or after his arrival in Rome.

• Beausobre Hist. des Manichéens. Tom. II. p. 300, 301.

## SECT. III.

*Of the design of this Epistle.*

I HAVE already observed in the first section of this chapter, that the second Epistle of St. Peter was addressed to Christians, who were born heathens. The purport of it is chiefly polemical; and it is evident, especially from the last chapter of the Epistle, that St. Peter wrote against certain persons, who, though members of the church, denied the doctrine of a general judgment, and a dissolution of the world<sup>p</sup>. They in-  
ferred

<sup>p</sup> This is not admitted by Wetstein, who contends that the last chapter of this Epistle relates, not to the end of the world, but to the destruction of Jerusalem. That this however is not true, will appear from the following considerations. First, St. Peter represents the fact, for which he argues, as possible, by appealing to the deluge. Now no man would appeal to the deluge, to show the possibility, that a city may be taken and destroyed: but we may very properly argue, that, as the earth has already undergone a material change, so it may undergo another change equally great. And what St. Peter says, is consonant to the Jewish theology, in which was taught the doctrine, that the earth was destined to suffer two grand revolutions, the one effected by water, the other to be effected by fire. See Joseph. Antiq. I. 3. 3. Secondly, no one could doubt, that Jerusalem would be destroyed, merely because the destruction was deferred longer than he expected, and still less, because ‘all things continued as they were from the beginning of the creation,’ ch. iii. 4. This ground of doubt manifestly implies, that the question related to a revolution of the earth. Thirdly, I know of no heretics, who called in question Christ’s prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem. And, even if there were such, it is hardly credible that St. Peter should write an Epistle to persons, who were born heathens, and lived in the northern part of Asia Minor, to prove an event, with which they had little or no concern. Fourthly, what St. Peter says ch. iii. 8. ‘that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day,’ is not very applicable to an event, which was to take place within six or seven years after St. Peter wrote. Lastly, if we explain what St. Peter says, as relating to the destruction of Jerusalem, we must take his expressions in a figurative sense: but figurative language, though it is well adapted to a prophecy, such as that which is recorded Matth. xxiv., is not very suitable to a plain doctrinal dissertation, especially to one delivered in the form of an Epistle.

ferred that this event, because it had been long delayed, would never take place : to which objection St. Peter replies, by saying ; that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day ; that the Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness, but is long suffering, not willing that any man should perish, but that all should come to repentance. Further, St. Peter argues that, as the earth has already undergone a great revolution at the deluge, another revolution equally great, is not incredible : and that, since the former event was at the time, when it happened, as unexpected, as the latter will be, we ought to believe in God's declaration that the world will one day be totally destroyed. This destruction St. Peter says, will be effected not by water, as at the deluge, but by fire : ' the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also, and the works that are therein shall be burned up.' Now a general conflagration will be more easily admitted by those who are acquainted with the state of the earth, than an universal deluge : for though it may be difficult to comprehend, whence a sufficient quantity of water could be brought to cover the whole earth, yet no one can deny that the bowels of the earth abound with inflammable matter, and that fiery eruptions may spread themselves throughout the surface of the globe.

It must be observed that St. Peter's appeal to the deluge in the time of Noah, implies that the adversaries, whom he combats, admitted that the Mosaic account of it was true, since it would have been useless to have argued from a fact, which they denied. This must be kept in view, because it will assist us in determining who these adversaries were.

The polemical part of this Epistle is not confined wholly to the third or last chapter, for it begins in the second, where St. Peter argues ver. 4—10. from the punishment already inflicted and hereafter to be inflicted on the fallen angels, as well as from the destruction of the antediluvian world, and of Sodom and Gomorrah,



that God is just, and that he will hereafter punish sinners. This again implies, that the persons, whose opinions St. Peter combats, not only believed the Mosaic history, but likewise the account of the fallen angels, their present banishment from heaven, and the more severe punishment which still awaited them. Hence therefore we have a second criterion, to assist us in determining St. Peter's adversaries.

If we go back to the first chapter, the end of which is closely connected with the beginning of the second, we shall perceive that these false teachers asserted, either that the Christian doctrine was only an instructive fable (*μυθος σεσοφισμενος*) or that divine revelation contained contradictions. The latter assertion has been supported by many, who made their philosophy the basis of their faith, and admitted only so much of divine revelation as agreed with their own system. This fundamental error he removes by saying, ch. i. 20. that divine Scripture cannot contradict itself, and ch. xi. 1. that if two prophets disagree, one of them must be a false prophet<sup>a</sup>.

Further, St. Peter describes these false teachers ch. ii. 10, 11, 12. as calumniators of the angels, which the Apostle highly censures, even though the calumny should be directed against the fallen angels, since some respect is due to their former greatness and power. St. Peter says; 'Angels themselves, which are greater in power and might, bring not railing accusation against them before the Lord: but these as natural brute beasts made to be taken and destroyed, speak of the things which they understand not.' Here we have a description of these false teachers, which points them out more distinctly than any of the preceding accounts, and shews that they were Gnostics. For though ecclesiastical history furnishes many examples of improper adoration paid to the angels, I know of no sect, which calumniated them, except that of the Gnostics. Now the Gnostics calumniated the angels

<sup>a</sup> See my treatise, *De indiciis philosophiæ Gnosticæ tempore LXX. interpretum, et Philonis*, § 8. in the second volume of the *Syntagma commentationum*, p. 266, 267.

angels by their doctrine in respect to the creation of the world. They raised certain angels to the rank of creators, but described the creation as very imperfect, and the authors of it as wicked and rebellious against the Supreme Being. Nay, some of them converted the creator of the world into the prince of darkness, and invented against him the most scandalous fables.

Another description, which St. Peter gives of these false teachers, though it is somewhat ambiguous, yet when properly explained corroborates the opinion, that these false teachers were Gnostics. He describes them ch. ii. 1. As ‘denying the Lord, that bought them.’ Here I cannot suppose that St. Peter meant the Lord Jesus: for, not to insist on the argument that the word *δεσποτης* is used in the Greek, and not *κυριος* the usual appellation of Christ, it is inconceivable how any set of men could deny the Lord Jesus, and still be considered as Christians. But these very persons were actually ranked among the Christians, as appears from the passage in question. By *δεσποτης* therefore I understand God the Father, whom the Gnostics denied, by asserting that he was not the Creator of the universe, which according to their system was created by an inferior being.

Having thus shewn that St. Peter in his second Epistle combats the opinions of a Gnostic sect, I will now venture to go a step further, and attempt to determine the name, which the orthodox gave to this particular sect, in the first century. St. Peter describes them ch. ii. 15. as, ‘following the way of Balaam,’ that is, as following the religious doctrine of Balaam. The doctrine of Balaam, as St. John says, Apoc. ii. 14. was ‘to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit fornication.’ And since Nicolaus in Greek has the same meaning as Balaam in Hebrew, the followers of Balaam are called by St. John, Apoc. ii. 15. Nicolaites. Now it is well known that the Nicolaites were a sect of the Gnostics: and therefore it is probable, that this was the sect against which St. Peter wrote,

To this opinion it has been objected, that if St. Peter had meant the Nicolaites, he would have called them, not followers of Balaam, but by their proper name, Nicolaites; first, because in general proper names are retained, and not translated, and secondly, because in the present instance no one, before Cocceius, observed the analogy between the Hebrew word Balaam and the Greek word Nicolaus. But neither of these reasons is true. For to say nothing of the general custom, which once prevailed among the literati in Germany, of translating their names into Greek or into Latin, I could produce examples of such translations among the Jews, of which it will be sufficient to mention that which occurs in Acts ix. 36. And the derivation of the Nicolaites from Balaam must have been long known, at least in Asia; for in the Arabic version published by Erpenius, we find an instance of it, in Apoc. ii. 6. where *τα εργα των Νικολαιτων* is rendered *اعمال الشعوب*, that is, 'works of the Shuaibites.' Now the Arabic word *شعيب* (Shuaib) is equivalent to the Hebrew Balaam<sup>r</sup>.

Two difficulties still remain respecting the opinion, that St. Peter wrote against the Gnostics. The one is, that St. Peter's adversaries denied, that there would be a day of general judgment; and it does not appear from the account, which we have of the Gnostics, that they ever made a positive declaration of this kind, at least in the manner in which St. Peter's adversaries made it. But if they did not deny this doctrine in positive terms, they denied

<sup>r</sup> Shuaib is mentioned in the Koran, (Sura vii. 86. xxvi. 176. and in other places) as the prophet of the Midianites. Some suppose that by Shuaib is meant Jethro, but in my opinion no other person is meant than Balaam, who was sent for by the Midianites, as well as by the Moabites. At least, I cannot comprehend how the Nicolaites, or any other heretics, could be considered as followers of Jethro. The Arabic verb *شَعَبَ* signifies perdidit, and the noun *شَعْب* populus. It is not improbable therefore that the Arabs adopted the word *شعيب* as corresponding to the Hebrew word *בלע*, which is compounded of *בלע* absorbfit, perdidit, and *ע* populus.



denied it virtually by maintaining principles, which are inconsistent with it. For they believed in a metempsychosis, and asserted, that the souls of men would transmigrate from their present bodies, in which they were confined as it were in a prison, into other successive bodies, till at last they would return to the source from which they had derived their origin. They maintained therefore a general restoration of the souls of men, and consequently could not believe in the doctrine, that there would be a general judgment, at which the souls of the wicked would be condemned to eternal punishment. If they admitted the influence of an evil spirit on the souls of the wicked, as some of the Manicheans did, still this influence was only temporary, was exerted only in an intermediate state, and in order to produce amendment, that all men might be finally happy. However it was not inconsistent with the Gnostic principles, to suppose, that the fallen angels, who according to their own system were the cause of all the evil in the world, and were wholly incapable of amendment, were at present in a state of misery, and would receive still greater punishment hereafter. It is certain that the Manicheans supposed so<sup>s</sup>, though they believed that the souls of men, with the exception only of the persecutors of the truth, would be perfectly happy: and though Manes, the founder of this sect, lived long after St. Peter, yet he was not the inventor of his whole system, for he had adopted many tenets which had been maintained by the Gnostics.

The other difficulty is, that St. Peter's adversaries denied, that the world would one day be destroyed by a general conflagration, and we have no authority for saying, that this was denied by the Gnostics. On the contrary the Manicheans admitted this doctrine, and it is perfectly consonant to the system of the Gnostics. For, as on the one hand they, who maintained the eternity of the world, argued from the wisdom and the perfection of the Creator, the Gnostics on the other hand,

<sup>s</sup> Beausobre Hist. des Manichéens. Liv. viii. ch. 5.



hand, who asserted that the world was created by a being, who had neither wisdom nor benevolence, might reasonably conclude, that it was so imperfect, as to be incapable of eternal duration. However, as the different sects of the Gnostics maintained such different principles, it is not impossible that some of them believed in the eternity of the world, since their notions of its imperfection did not necessarily imply a cessation of duration<sup>t</sup>.

Lastly, some of the Gnostics had a severe, others a loose system of morality. And that St. Peter's adversaries belonged, not to the first, but to the second class, is evident from what he says against them in the second chapter.

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## C H A P. XXIX.

### OF THE EPISTLE OF ST. JUDE<sup>u</sup>.

#### S E C T. I.

*Of the author of this Epistle, whether he was an Apostle, called Jude, or whether he was Jude the brother-in-law of Jesus.*

**I**N the first section of the twenty-sixth chapter I have stated at large the various opinions, which have been entertained relative to the James and the Jude, whom  
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<sup>t</sup> Philo, who was contemporary with St. Peter, wrote a treatise, *De incorruptibilitate mundi*, in which he defended a doctrine contrary to that delivered by St. Peter. But Philo was not a Gnostic: nor was he one of those 'scorners,' of whom St. Peter complains.

<sup>u</sup> Though the Epistle of St. Jude is placed the last among the Catholic Epistles, I introduce it here immediately after the second Epistle of St. Peter, on account of the great resemblance, which these two Epistles bear to each other.

the Evangelists<sup>w</sup> call brothers of Jesus. To that section therefore I must refer the reader, because the question, which was there examined, has very material influence on the decision of our present question<sup>x</sup>. It, according to one of the opinions stated in the section just mentioned, James and Jude, whom the Evangelists call brothers of Jesus, were in fact only cousins, or relations, and were sons, not of Joseph, but of Alphæus, these two persons were the same as the two brothers James and Jude, who were Apostles<sup>y</sup>. And in this case Jude, the author of our Epistle, was the same as the Apostle Jude, the brother of James, who was son of Alphæus: or, at least, if the Epistle be a forgery, it was a forgery in his name. On the other hand, if the James and the Jude, whom the Evangelists call brothers of Jesus, were not the two brothers of this name, who were Apostles, but were the sons of Joseph, the reputed father of Jesus, we have then two different persons of the name of Jude, either of which might have written this Epistle. And in this case we have to examine, whether the Epistle was written by an Apostle of the name of Jude, or by Jude the brother-in-law of Christ.

The author of the Epistle himself has assumed neither the title of Apostle of Jesus Christ, nor of brother of Jesus Christ, but calls himself only ‘Jude the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James.’ Now as the author distinguishes himself by the title ‘brother of James,’

<sup>w</sup> Matth. xiii. 55. Mark vi. 3.

<sup>x</sup> In our present inquiry there is also another question involved, relative to Adæus, or Thaddæus, the Apostle of the Syrians, as will appear in the sequel.

<sup>y</sup> To prevent mistakes on this subject, it is necessary to observe, that in the list of the twelve Apostles given by St. Matthew, ch. x. 2—4. and St. Mark, ch. iii. 16—19. the name of Jude, a brother of James, who was son of Alphæus, does not occur. It occurs however in both of the lists which are given by St. Luke, in his Gospel, ch. vi. 16. and in the Acts, ch. i. 15.: for in both places we find *Ιουδας Ιακωβου*, by which is meant *Ιουδας αδελφους Ιακωβου*. And though St. Matthew and St. Mark have not mentioned this Apostle by the name of *Ιουδας*, they have still mentioned him, but under a different name. St. Mark ch. iii. 18. calls him *Θαδδαιος*, and St. Matthew, ch. x. 3. names him *Λεββαιος*, ὁ ἐπικληθεὶς Θαδδαιος.

James,' and this was a common name among the Jews, he undoubtedly meant some eminent person of this name, who was well known at the time when he wrote, or the title 'brother of James' would have been no mark of distinction. We may infer therefore, that the author of this Epistle, was brother either of the Apostle James, the son of Alphæus, or of James called the brother of Jesus, or of both, if they were one and the same person.

The first question to be asked therefore is, Was the author of this Epistle the Apostle Jude, who was brother of James the son of Alphæus. Now I have already observed, that this question *must* be answered in the affirmative, if James and Jude, who were called brothers of Jesus, were the same as the two brothers, James and Jude, who were Apostles. And it *may* be answered in the affirmative, even if they were different persons: for Jude, the author of our Epistle, had in either case a brother of the name of James, and therefore might in either case call himself, 'Jude the brother of James.' I say the question *may* be answered in the affirmative, even if the Apostle Jude was a different person from Jude called the brother of Jesus. But whether it ought, in this case, to be answered in the affirmative, is another matter: and I really believe, that it ought not. For, if the Jude, who wrote this Epistle, had been himself an Apostle, and brother of an Apostle, he would hardly have called himself, in an Epistle written to Christians, simply 'Jude the brother of James' without adding the title Apostle. It is true, that the Apostle Jude, who was brother of James, is called by St. Luke simply *Ἰδδας Ἰακώβου*: but St. Luke gives him this title merely to distinguish him from another Apostle of this name, who was called Iscariot. Now the author of this Epistle could have no motive for distinguishing himself from Judas Iscariot, who had hanged himself many years before this Epistle was written. The name of Jude was very common among the Jews, and therefore the author of this Epistle wished to distinguish

tinguish himself from other persons, who were so called. But James was likewise a very common name; and therefore, if the author had been an Apostle, he surely would have preferred an appellation, which would have removed all doubt, to an appellation, which left it at least uncertain, whether he was an Apostle or not, I grant, that the omission of this title does not necessarily prove, that the author of our Epistle was not an Apostle: for St. Paul has omitted it in four of his Epistles<sup>2</sup>. But St. Paul was sufficiently known without this title: whereas the author of the Epistle in question felt the necessity of a distinguishing appellation, as appears from the very title, which he has given himself of ‘brother of James.’ Besides, at the time, when this Epistle was written, only one Apostle, of the name of James, was then alive, for the elder James, the son of Zebedee, had been beheaded many years before. If then the author of our Epistle had only given to his brother James the title of Apostle, he would thus likewise have clearly ascertained who he himself was. But, since he has no more given to his brother, than to himself, the title of Apostle, I think it highly probable, that neither of them were Apostles.

The next question to be asked therefore is, Was the Jude, who wrote our Epistle, the same person, as the Jude, whom the Evangelists call brother of Jesus, and who, according to the opinion, which I think the most defensible<sup>3</sup>, was in this sense ‘brother of Jesus,’ that he was son of Joseph by a former wife, and therefore not own brother, but only brother in law of Jesus. Now that our Epistle was written by a person of this description, appears to me highly probable. And on this supposition we may assign the reason, why the author called himself ‘brother of James:’ for if he was the brother in law of Jesus, his brother James was the person,

<sup>2</sup> In the Epistle to the Philippians, in both Epistles to the Thessalonians, and in that to Philemon.

<sup>3</sup> See Ch. xxvi. Sect. 1.



person, who during so many years had presided over the church at Jerusalem, was well known both to Jews and to Christians, and appears to have been more celebrated than either of the Apostles, who were called James. It will be objected perhaps, that the very same reasons, which I have alleged, to shew that an Apostle, of the name of Jude, would have assumed his proper title, will likewise shew that a person, who was called brother of Jesus, would have done the same, and have styled himself Jude the brother of Jesus. To this I answer, that if he was the son of Joseph, not by Mary, but by a former wife, and Jude believed in the immaculate conception, he must have been sensible, that, though to all outward appearance he was brother in law of Jesus, since his own father was the husband of Jesus's mother, yet in reality he was no relation of Jesus. On the other hand, if Jude, called the brother of Jesus, was the son of Joseph, not by a former wife, but by Mary, as Herder asserts, I do not see how the preceding objection can be answered. For, if Jesus and Jude had the same mother, Jude might, without the least impropriety, have styled himself 'brother of Jesus,' or 'brother of the Lord : ' and this would have been a much more remarkable and distinguishing title, than that of 'brother of James.'

A third question still remains to be asked on this subject. The Apostle, whom St. Luke calls Jude, is called Thaddæus by St. Matthew and St. Mark, as I have already observed. But the Apostle of the Syrians, who first preached the Gospel at Edessa, and founded a church there, was named Thaddæus or Adæus. It may be asked therefore, whether the author of our Epistle was Thaddæus the Apostle of the Syrians, though indeed it is not very probable that he was, since this Epistle is not in the old Syriac version.

Eusebius<sup>b</sup> relates, that the inhabitants of the city of Edessa were converted to Christianity by a disciple named Thaddæus, who went thither immediately after Christ's

<sup>b</sup> Hist. Eccles. Lib. I. c. 13.

Christ's ascension. It is true, that in the accounts, which Eusebius has given of the conversion of the Syrians, there are several circumstances, such as the correspondence of king Abgarus with Christ, and others of a like nature, which are probably fabulous. But the principal fact, that Thaddæus preached the Gospel at Edeffa, and converted the Syrians to Christianity soon after the ascension, will hardly admit of a doubt, since the Syrian writers themselves are unanimous in the assertion, that Thaddæus was their Apostle<sup>c</sup>. They call him in general Adai<sup>d</sup> (ܐܕܝ), and relate, that he came to Edeffa soon after the ascension, healed king Abgarus of the leprosy, converted him to Christianity, and founded a church. From Edeffa he went into Assyria, where he likewise preached the Gospel; he then returned to Edeffa, and died there in the twelfth year of his preaching, that is, in the twelfth year after the ascension. In respect to the manner of his death, Syrian authors are not agreed. Some say, that he died a natural death, while Abgarus was still living; but others relate, that he suffered martyrdom under Maanus, who, though son and successor of Abgarus<sup>e</sup>, was not, like his father, a convert to Christianity. But whatever death he died, the city of Edeffa has always claimed the honour of his burial place.

Most Syrian writers, as well as Eusebius, reckon this Thaddæus, or Adæus, as the Syrians call him, not as one of the twelve Apostles, but as one of the seventy disciples. But according to Jerom, he was the Apostle Thaddæus<sup>f</sup>, consequently the Apostle, whom St. Luke calls

<sup>c</sup> See Assemani Bibl. Orient. T. I. p. 317—319. T. II. p. 391—394. Tom. III. P. i. p. 299. 302. 306. T. III. P. ii. p. 4—15. and Bayer's *Historia Osrhoëna et Edeffena*, p. 104—120.

<sup>d</sup> The reason, why they omit the *Th* at the beginning, may be seen in my Syriac Grammar.

<sup>e</sup> Maanus succeeded Abgarus, in the month of March, A. C. 45.

<sup>f</sup> In his Commentary on Matth. x. Tom. IV. p. 37. he says, Thaddæum apostolum ecclesiastica tradit historia missum Edeffam ad Abgarum regem Osrhoënæ.

calls Jude the brother of James: and Assēman<sup>g</sup> quotes Jesujabas, who lived indeed so late as the twelfth century, and therefore is of no great authority, in favour of the same opinion. Jacob, bishop of Sarug, who was born in the year 452, describes Adæus as brother of Christ: for in a work, which he has written ‘on the Apostle Adæus, and king Abgarus,’ he expresses himself thus, ‘After the ever-blessed bridegroom was exalted to heaven, he resolved, as he had promised, to send, out of love, some one to Abgarus, and he chose for that purpose Adai, one of his brothers<sup>h</sup>.’ Now if the Apostle Jude, the brother of James, is the same, as the Jude, who was called brother of Christ, the word Apostle, as used by Jacob, bishop of Sarug, must be taken in its proper sense: but if the Apostle Jude, and Jude called the brother of Christ, were different persons, or, at least, if Jacob considered them as such, the title Apostle applied by him to Adæus, must denote, not one of the twelve, but simply an Apostle, or converter of the Syrians.

According to some Syrian writers, two persons of the name of Thaddæus were employed in their conversion, the one an Apostle, the other one of the seventy disciples. The latter, they say, was sent by the Apostle Thomas to king Abgarus, immediately after Christ’s ascension: but the former, according to their accounts, went some years later to Edessa, whence he travelled into Assyria, and thence returned into Phœnicia, in which country he died a martyr, either at Baruth, or at Arad, for on this head they are not agreed<sup>i</sup>. This Apostle Thaddæus they generally<sup>k</sup> call, not the brother, but

<sup>g</sup> Bibl. Orient. Tom. III. P. i. p. 299. 302.

<sup>h</sup> ܐܕܝܐ ܐܕ ܕܐܝܠ ܐܕܝܐ. Assēmani Bibl. Orient. Tom. I. p. 318.

<sup>i</sup> Assēmani Bibl. Orient. Tom. III. P. ii. p. 13—15.

<sup>k</sup> But not universally, for according to Hassencamp, p. 43, 44. some Syrian writers call him ‘Jude the brother of James, who was brother of the Lord.’

but the son of James, (ܐܕܡܢ ܝܥܩܘܒ), a mistake, which arose from a false interpretation of the words *Ιεδας Ιακωβ*: and this very mistake has been made in the Syriac version, for in both places where this title occurs; namely, Luke vi. 16. Acts i. 13. it is rendered ‘Jude the son of James<sup>1</sup>.’ Now this mistake in the Syriac version could not have taken place, if the Syriac translator had ever seen the Epistle of St. Jude, in which the author expressly calls himself ‘brother of James.’ But this Epistle is not contained in the old version, and consequently it was unknown to the translator<sup>m</sup>.

From these contradictory and uncertain accounts of the Syrians we can form little or no judgement, in respect to the author of our Epistle. Adai (ܐܕܝ), who was the first Apostle of the Syrians, and one of the seventy disciples, could not be the author; for he died in the twelfth year after the ascension, whereas our Epistle was written, as will appear from a following section, after the second Epistle of St. Peter, and therefore long after the death of Adai. Nor do we know, whether this Adai, the first Apostle of the Syrians, was also called Jude, as well as the other Adai their second Apostle: unless it be said, that Adai, Thaddai, Juda, are one and the same name differently pronounced. And, what is the most decisive, the old Syriac version does not contain this Epistle. Consequently,

<sup>1</sup> However in the Arabic version published by Erpenius, it is properly rendered in the latter place by ‘Jude the brother of James.’ (يهود اخو يعقوب).

<sup>m</sup> Even without having seen the Epistle of St. Jude, one might suppose, that the old Syriac translator, who lived in so very early an age, could hardly have made a mistake in respect to the Apostle, whom St. Luke calls *Ιεδας Ιακωβ*, especially as this very Jude, or Thaddæus, as St. Matthew and St. Mark call him, was so instrumental in the conversion of the Syrians, who must have known therefore, whether he was brother, or son of James. I wish that they, who have access to MSS. of the Syriac version, would examine, whether in some of them *Ιεδας Ιακωβ*, Luke vi. 16. Act. i. 13. is not differently rendered.



quently, it is highly probable, that Adai, or Adæus, was not the author: for an Epistle, written by the great Apostle of the Syrians, would surely have been received into the canon of the Syrian church.

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## S E C T. II.

*Of the persons to whom, and of the time when, this Epistle was written: and whether the author of it had read the second Epistle of St. Peter.*

I AM really unable to determine, who the persons were, to whom this Epistle was sent. For no traces are to be discovered in it, which enable us to form the least judgement on this subject: and the address, with which the Epistle commences, is so indeterminate, that there is hardly any Christian community, where Greek was spoken, which might not be denoted by it. Though this Epistle has a very great similarity to the second Epistle of St. Peter, it cannot have been sent to the same persons, namely, the Christians, who resided in Pontus, Cappadocia, &c. because no mention is made of them in this Epistle. Nor can it have been sent to the Christians of Syria and Assyria, where St. Jude preached the Gospel, if he is the same person as the Apostle of the Syrians: for in this case, the Epistle would not have been written in Greek, but in Syriac or Chaldee, and would certainly have been received into the old Syriac version.

With respect to the date of this Epistle, all that I am able to assert is, that it was written after the second Epistle of St. Peter. But how many years after, whether between 64 and 66, as Lardner supposes, or between 70 and 75, as Beaufobre and L'Enfant believe,

or, according to Dodwell and Cave, in 71 or 72, or so late as the year 90, which is the opinion of Mill, I confess, that I am unable to determine, at least from any certain data. The expression ‘in the last time,’ which occurs, ver. 18. as well as in 2 Pet. iii. 3. is too indeterminate to warrant any conclusion respecting the date of this Epistle. For, though on the one hand, it may refer to the approaching destruction of Jerusalem, it may, on the other hand, refer to a later period, and denote the close of the Apostolic age: for in the first Epistle of St. John a similar expression occurs, which must be taken in this latter sense. The inference therefore, that the Epistle of St. Jude was written before the destruction of Jerusalem, which some commentators have deduced from the above-mentioned expression, on the supposition, that it alluded to that event then approaching, is very precarious, because it is drawn from premises, which are themselves uncertain. However there is some reason to believe, on other grounds, that this Epistle was not written after the destruction of Jerusalem. For as the author has mentioned, ver. 5—8. several well-known instances of God’s justice, in punishing sinners, which St. Peter had already quoted in his second Epistle to the same purpose, he would probably, if Jerusalem had been already destroyed, at the time when he wrote, have not neglected to add to his other examples this most remarkable instance of divine vengeance, especially as Christ himself had foretold it.

I said in the preceding paragraph, that the Epistle of St. Jude was written after the second Epistle of St. Peter. This appears from a comparison of the two Epistles, which are so similar to each other both in sentiments and in expressions, as no two Epistles could well be, unless the author of the one had read the Epistle of the other. It is evident therefore, that St. Jude borrowed from St. Peter both expressions and arguments, to which he himself has made some few additions.

additions. Lardner<sup>n</sup> indeed, though he admits the similarity of the two Epistles, still thinks it a matter of doubt, whether St. Jude had ever seen the second Epistle of St. Peter. Lardner's reason is, 'that if St. Jude had formed a design of writing, and had met with an Epistle of one of the Apostles, very suitable to his own thoughts and intentions, he would have forborne to write.' To this argument I answer :

1. If the Epistle of St. Jude was inspired by the Holy Ghost, as Lardner admits, the Holy Ghost certainly knew, while he was dictating the Epistle to St. Jude, that an Epistle of St. Peter, of a like import, already existed. And if the Holy Ghost, notwithstanding this knowledge, still thought, that an Epistle of St. Jude was not unnecessary, why shall we suppose, that St. Jude himself would have been prevented from writing by the same knowledge.

On the other hand, if the Epistle of St. Jude is not genuine, but is a forgery in his name, there is no improbability in the supposition, that the author derived his materials from an Epistle of St. Peter, in the same manner, as the person, who forged the Epistle to the Laodiceans in the name of St. Paul, copied from Apostolic writings.

2. The second Epistle of St. Peter was addressed to the inhabitants of some particular countries: but the address of St. Jude's Epistle is general. St. Jude therefore might think it necessary to repeat for general use, what St. Peter had written only to certain communities.

3. The Epistle of St. Jude is not a bare copy of the second Epistle of St. Peter: for in the former, not only several thoughts are more completely unravelled than in the latter, but several additions are made to what St. Peter had said, for instance in ver. 4, 5. 9—16.

<sup>n</sup> Supplement, Vol. III. p. 352.

## S E C T. III.

*Of the canonical authority of this Epistle: and first of the external evidence in its favour.*

EUSEBIUS in his Catalogue of the books of the New Testament<sup>o</sup> places the Epistle of St. Jude among the *αντιλεγόμενα*, in company with the Epistle of St. James, the second Epistle of St. Peter, and the second and third of St. John.

But Origen, who lived in the third century, though he speaks in dubious terms of the second Epistle of St. Peter, has several times quoted the Epistle of St. Jude, and has spoken of it as an Epistle, on which he entertained no doubt. In his Commentary on St. Matthew, when he comes to Ch. xiii. 55. where James, Josès, Simon, and Jude, are mentioned, he says, ‘Jude wrote an Epistle, of few lines indeed, but full of the powerful words of the heavenly grace, who, at the beginning says, “Jude the servant of Jesus Christ and brother of James<sup>p</sup>.”’ This is a very clear and unequivocal declaration of Origen’s opinion<sup>q</sup>: and it is the more remarkable, because he says nothing of the Epistle of St. James, though the passage Matth. xiii. 55. afforded him as good an opportunity of speaking of this Epistle, as it did of the Epistle of St. Jude. Nay, Origen carries his veneration for the Epistle of St. Jude so far, that in his treatise *De principiis*, Lib. III. cap. 2. he quotes an apocryphal book called, *The Assumption of Moses*,

<sup>o</sup> Hist. Eccles. Lib. III. c. 25.

<sup>p</sup> Ἰούδας ἐγράψεν ἐπιστολὴν, ὀλιγοστίχον μὲν, πεπληρωμένην δὲ τῶν τῆς θείας χάριτος ἐρῶμενων λόγων, ὅτις ἐν τῇ προοίμῳ εἰρηκεν Ἰούδας, Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ἀδελφός, ἀδελφὸς δὲ Ἰακώβου.

<sup>q</sup> Other quotations from Origen, of a like import, may be seen in Lardner’s Supplement, Vol. III. p. 332, 333. and in his *Credibility*, p. II. Vol. III. Ch. xxviii.



Moses, as a work of authority, because a passage from this book had been quoted by St. Jude. In one instance however, in his Commentary on St. Matthew, Origen speaks in less positive terms, for he there says, ‘ If any one receive the Epistle of St. Jude’, &c.’

Tertullian, in whose works Lardner could discover no quotation from the second Epistle of St. Peter, describes the Epistle of St. Jude as the work of an Apostle: for in his treatise *De cultu feminarum*, c. 3. he says, ‘ Hence it is, that Enoch is quoted by the Apostle Jude.’

Clement of Alexandria, in whose works likewise Lardner could find no quotation from the second Epistle of St. Peter, has three times quoted the Epistle of St. Jude<sup>s</sup>, without expressing any doubt whatsoever.

It appears then, that the three ancient fathers, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, and Origen, as far as we may judge from their writings, which are now extant, preferred the Epistle of St. Jude to the second Epistle of St. Peter. However I think it not impossible, that, if all the writings of these authors were now extant, passages might be found in them, which would turn the scale in favour of the latter: and it may be owing to mere accident, that in those parts of their works, which have descended to us, more passages, in which they speak decidedly of the Epistle of St. Jude, are to be found, than such as are favourable to the second Epistle of St. Peter. For I really cannot comprehend how any impartial man, who has to choose between these two Epistles, which are very similar to each other, can prefer the former to the latter, or receive the Epistle of St. Jude, the contents of which labour under great difficulties, and at the same time consider as dubious, or even reject, the second Epistle of St. Peter, the contents of which labour under no such

<sup>s</sup> Εἰ δὲ καὶ τὴν Ἰεῦδα προσηγορεύει ἐπιστολήν.

<sup>1</sup> See Lardner's Supplement, Vol. III. p. 326—328.

such difficulties. Whoever acts in this manner must have some prejudice against one or more of the doctrines delivered in the second Epistle of St. Peter. Now that Origen, and likewise his preceptor Clement, had such a prejudice, I will endeavour to shew in the following paragraph <sup>t</sup>.

One of St. Peter's doctrines, in his second Epistle, ch. iii. was, that the world would be finally destroyed. This is absolutely denied by Philo, in his treatise de incorruptibilitate mundi: and I think, that Origen, who was an Alexandrine writer, as well as Philo, entertained the same notions. At least, what he has written<sup>u</sup> on Matth. xxiv. 29, 30. amounts to this, that the violent dissolution of the world, there described, is a matter replete with difficulty, and to be left to the faith of the weak and the unphilosophical. In his treatise De principiis, Lib. I. cap. 6. where we might expect to find his real sentiments in respect to a day of judgement and a dissolution of the world, he cautiously avoids the giving of any decisive opinion on this subject, and says, that he argues only, and does not determine<sup>w</sup>. That the world will undergo a change<sup>x</sup>, he admits without reserve, though not, that it will be totally annihilated, for which indeed no rational man will contend. But the manner, in which this change is to take place, is that, which he leaves undetermined, and

<sup>t</sup> What I am now going to say, I submit to the decision of those, who are better acquainted with the works of Origen than myself: and I shall be ready to retract my opinion, as soon as passages shall be produced, which shew, that my suspicions are without foundation.

<sup>u</sup> Commentariorum series in Matthæum, Sect. 48, 49. Tom. III. p. 865, 866. ed. Benedict.

<sup>w</sup> Quæ quidem a nobis cum magno metu et cautela dicuntur, discutientibus magis ac pertractantibus, quam pro certo ac definito statuendis. Indicatum namque a nobis in superioribus est, quæ sint, de quibus manifesto dogmate terminandum sit:—nunc autem disputandi specie, magis quem definiendi, prout possumus, exercemus, Sect. 1. Tom. I. p. 69.

<sup>x</sup> Immutationem qualitatis, et habitus transformationem, Sect. 4.

and he has taken no notice in the whole chapter of the second Epistle of St. Peter, in which it is said, that this change will be effected by fire. He uses indeed the expression ‘a new heaven and a new earth’ which occurs in this Epistle, but he quotes it from Isaiah, and not from St. Peter<sup>7</sup>. Though Origen does not positively deny a general conflagration, he does not positively grant it: and it is obvious, that the new heaven and the new earth, of which he speaks, might denote, in his opinion, nothing more than an improvement of their present state, and not a totally new world, which should rise out of the ruins of the old. Origen’s principles therefore appear to differ from the doctrine delivered by St. Peter on this subject in his second Epistle: and this is probably the reason, why he esteemed this Epistle less than the Epistle of St. Jude. One of them he thought it necessary to retain, because these are the only two Epistles, in which the history of the rebellious angels is recorded, and this history was at that time of very great importance.

After the time of Eusebius, the Epistle of St. Jude was received both by the Greek and by the Latin church: but it does not enter into my plan, to appeal to the decision of councils, or to the sentiments of ecclesiastical writers, who lived in the fifth and following centuries.

The ancient Syrian church did not receive it: at least it has no place in the old Syriac version, any more than the second Epistle of St. Peter, and the two last Epistles of St. John. What later Syrian writers have thought of it, I know not: nor has Hassencamp in his Remarks on the first edition of this Introduction been able to produce passages from Syrian authors, as decidedly in favour of this Epistle, as he has done in favour of the other Epistles, which are not contained in the old Syriac version.

<sup>7</sup> Esaias quoque, cum per prophetiam dixit, ‘quia erit cœlum novum, et terra nova,’ similem suggerit intellectum.

## S E C T. IV.

*The same question examined from internal evidence.*

**I**T appears from the preceding section, that the external evidence is more in favour of this Epistle than against it: but if we examine its contents, we shall find, that there is less reason to believe it to be a work of divine authority, than Origen supposed. However not every objection, which has been made to it, is unanswerable.

The very first objection, for instance, which is made to ver. 6, 7. may be easily removed. It has been said, that in the expression ὅμοιον τέτοις τρεσπον, ver. 7. the pronoun τέτοις refers to αγγελοι, ver. 6. Now if this were true, the author of our Epistle would say, that Sodom and Gomorrha, and other neighbouring cities, committed fornication, in the same manner as the fallen angels, and would thus appear to relate, as a real fact, the fable of the angels committing fornication with the daughters of men. But there is no necessity for referring τέτοις to αγγελοι, since it may be referred, without violating the grammatical construction, to Σοδομα, which is a neuter plural, and had been used at the beginning of ver. 7. Or it may relate to the false teachers, mentioned in the next verse, whom the author of this Epistle expressly compares with the inhabitants of Sodom, on account of their licentious behaviour.

But it is much more difficult to vindicate the ninth verse, in which the Archangel Michael is said to have disputed with the devil about the body of Moses. The whole history of this dispute, which has the appearance of a Jewish fable<sup>2</sup>, it is not very easy at present

<sup>2</sup> Herder, in his Essay on the two Epistles of St. James and St. Jude, p. 81, 82. asserts, that this story was derived by St. Jude, not from



sent to discover, because the book, from which it is supposed to have been taken by the author of our Epistle, is no longer extant: but I will here put together such scattered accounts of it, as I have been able to collect.

Origen found in a Jewish Greek book, called the ‘Assumption of Moses<sup>a</sup>,’ which was extant in his time, though it is now lost, this very story related concerning the dispute of the Archangel Michael with the devil about the body of Moses. And from a comparison of the relation in this book with St. Jude’s quotation, he was thoroughly persuaded, that it was the book, from which St. Jude quoted. This he asserts without the least hesitation: and in consequence of this persuasion he himself has quoted the Assumption of Moses, as a work of authority, in proof of the temptation of Adam and Eve by the devil<sup>b</sup>. But as he has quoted it merely for this purpose, he has given us only an imperfect account of what this book contained, relative to the dispute about the body of Moses. One circumstance however he has mentioned, which is not found in the Epistle of St. Jude, namely, that Michael reproached the devil with having possessed the serpent, which seduced Eve. In what manner this circumstance is connected with the dispute about the body of Moses will appear from the following consideration. The Jews imagined, the person of Moses was so holy, that God could find no reason for permitting him to die: and that nothing, but the sin committed by Adam

from a Jewish legend but from a Zoroastrian doctrine in the Zend-Avesta. Now whether the passage, which Herder, who every where discovers Zoroastrian doctrines, has quoted from the Zend-Avesta, or the well-known Jewish legend, is best adapted to the place in question, I think no man will long hesitate in determining. But even if Herder’s opinion were true, no advantage could accrue from it to the Epistle of St. Jude: for what he has quoted from the Zend-Avesta is certainly a fable, nor can he himself suppose it to be otherwise.

<sup>a</sup> *Αναληψις το Μωσεως.*

<sup>b</sup> De principiis, Lib. III. cap. 2. ‘Et primo quidem in genesi serpens Evam seduxisse describitur, de quo in Ascensione Moysis, cujus libelli meminit in Epistola sua Apostolus Judas: Michael archangelus, cum diabolo disputans de corpore Moyse, ait, a diabolo inspiratum serpentem causam extitisse prævaricationis Adæ et Evæ.’

Adam and Eve in paradise, which brought death into the world, was the cause, why Moses did not live for ever. The same notions they entertained of some other very holy persons, for instance, of Isai, who, they say, was delivered to the angel of death merely on account of the sins of our first parents, though he himself did not deserve to die. Now in the dispute between Michael and the devil about Moses, the devil was the accuser, and demanded the death of Moses. Michael therefore replied to him, that he himself was the cause of that sin, which alone could occasion the death of Moses.—How very little such notions, as these, agree either with the Christian theology, or with Moses's own writings, it is unnecessary for me to declare.

Lardner<sup>c</sup> indeed contends that Origen was mistaken in his assertion, that St. Jude quoted from a book called the Assumption of Moses, and says, there is reason to believe, though this book existed in the time of Origen, that it was not written till after the time of St. Jude. But Lardner assigns no reason for this assertion; and since he himself never saw the book, and therefore could form no judgement of it, I think it very extraordinary, that he should venture to contradict such an eminent critic as Origen, who had actually seen it, and who lived within two hundred years after the time of St. Jude. If the Assumption of Moses had not been written before the second century, the age in which Origen's preceptor, Clement of Alexandria lived, it is wholly incredible that Origen, whose particular talent was criticism, should have suffered himself to be so imposed upon, in respect to the time of its composition, as to imagine that St. Jude quoted it in the first century.

Nor is Lardner the only person who asserts, that St. Jude did not quote from the Assumption of Moses, for several other writers, in order to remove the reproach of a quotation from an apocryphal book, have maintained that this very book, instead of having been quoted by St. Jude, was a later forgery of some Christian, and that the

<sup>c</sup> Supplement, Vol. III. p. 344.

the passage in St. Jude's Epistle relative to Michael and the devil gave rise to the fabrication. Now this is a mere conjecture: and it is a very improbable one, because we know that similar, though not the same accounts, relative to a conversation of Michael and the devil at the death of Moses, are contained likewise in Hebrew writings of the Jews. But no one can suppose that the Jews would fabricate a work, out of compliment to an Epistle written by a Christian author.

Beside the account given by Origen, there is a passage in the works of Oecumenius, which likewise contains a part of the story related in the Assumption of Moses, and which explains the reason of the dispute, which St. Jude has mentioned concerning Moses's body. According to this passage, Michael was employed in burying Moses; but, the devil endeavoured to prevent it, by saying that he had murdered an Egyptian, and was therefore unworthy of an honourable burial<sup>d</sup>. Hence it appears, that some modern writers are mistaken, who have imagined, that in the ancient narrative, the dispute was said to have arisen from an attempt of the devil to reveal to the Jews the burial place of Moses, and to incite them to an idolatrous worship of his body.

There is still extant a Jewish book, written, in Hebrew, and entitled פְּטִירַת מֹשֶׁה, that is, 'The death of Moses,' which some critics, especially De la Rue<sup>e</sup>, suppose to be the same work, as that which Origen saw in Greek. Now if it were, this Hebrew book, entitled Phetirath Moshe, would throw a great light on our present inquiry: but I have carefully examined it, and can

<sup>d</sup> The words of Oecumenius, Tom. II. p. 629. are, 'Ἡ δὲ περὶ τοῦ Μωϋσεως σωματος κρισις ἐστὶν αὕτη' λέγεται τὸν Μιχαὴλ τὸν ἀρχαγγέλου τῇ τοῦ Μωϋσεως ταφῇ δεδιηκονικῆναι. Τὸ δὲ διαβολὴ τὸτο μὴ καταδεχομένῃ ἀλλ' ἐπιφερόντος ἐγκλημα διὰ τὸν τῷ Αἰγυπτίῳ φόνον, ὡς διὰ τὸτο ἐνοχῶντος Μωϋσεως, καὶ μὴ συγχωρεῖσθαι τυχὲν τῆς ἐντιμῆς ταφῆς. A more full account of this fable is contained in a Greek scholion on Jude 9. in the Codex Lambecii 34. of which a transcript may be seen in the Orient. Bib. Vol. XXIII. p. 153.

<sup>e</sup> See his note on the above-quoted passage in Origen de principiis, Lib. III. c. 2.



can assert, that it is a modern work, and that its contents are not the same as those of the Greek book quoted by Origen.

Of the Phetirath Moshe we have two editions, which contain very different texts<sup>f</sup>. The one was printed at Constantinople in 1518, and reprinted at Venice in 1544 and 1605. The other was published from a manuscript by Gilbert Gaulmyn, who added a translation of both texts, with notes<sup>g</sup>. This is the edition which I have used, and for which I am indebted to Professor Reimarus in Hamburg.

Though the two texts are in many respects different, they are still texts of the same work, and their difference arose merely from the liberties taken by transcribers, who have acted here, as they have done in regard to other Jewish legends, and have made alterations and additions in the copies, which they wrote, with as much freedom as the author himself had used in the original composition. Both texts agree in the main with the book called Debarim Rabba, which is likewise a fabulous narrative of the death and burial of Moses. But this Hebrew book, Phetirath Moshe, is not the same as the Greek book, *Αναληψις τῆ Μωσεως*, which Origen read, and which he says was quoted by St. Jude: much less is the latter a translation of the former. The Phetirath Moshe was undoubtedly written in a later age: for it contains frequent quotations from the Talmud, and in p. 109, even Abenefra is quoted<sup>h</sup>. And the story which

<sup>f</sup> They are described in Wolfii Bibliotheca Rabbinica, Tom. II. p. 1278, 1279, 1394.

<sup>g</sup> The title of this edition is רעה דברי הימים ופטירתו של משה, De vita et morte Moſis, libri tres. Gilbertus Gaulmyn, Molinensis, ex MSS. exemplaribus primus Hebraice edidit, Latina interpretatione et notis illustravit. Parisiis, apud Tuffanum du Bray, via Jacobæa, sub spicis maturis, 1629.

<sup>h</sup> It is therefore extraordinary that Gaulmyn, the editor of this book, should express a doubt whether it were ancient or modern. He says, p. 375, *Edimus, nescio an illos (libros) prorsus, quos ante Christum Judaicæ plebi cognitissimos scimus. Certe, ut est traditionum suarum gens pertinacissima, omnino, si historiam spectes, eosdem habes: quod plenius ostendemus in diatriba de apocryphis Hebræorum libris.*



which it contains, though probably an ancient one, is not the same, as that which is contained in the *Αναληψις τῆς Μωσεως*: for several material circumstances quoted by Origen and Oecumenius from the latter, are not mentioned in the former. In the Phetirath Moshe for instance,

1. The devil, who is there called Samael, does not dispute about the burial of Moses.

2. Michael does not reproach the devil with having possessed the serpent, which seduced Eve.

3. Michael does not say to him, ‘The Lord rebuke thee.’

4. But he himself rebukes the devil, and calls him *שׂר*, that is, thou wicked wretch. And Moses says the same to the devil, when he comes by God’s command to fetch his soul.—This is the very reverse of that which St. Jude relates concerning the dispute of Michael with the devil.

The substance of the story related in this book, as far as concerns the present inquiry, is as follows.

Moses requests of God under various pretences, either that he may not die at all, or at least that he may not die before he comes into Palestine. This request he makes in so froward and petulant a manner, as is highly unbecoming not only a great prophet, but even any man, who has expectations of a better life after this. In short Moses is here represented in the light of a despicable Jew, begging for a continuance of life, and devoid both of Christian faith, and of heathen courage: and it is therefore not improbable, that the inventor of this fable made himself the model, after which he formed the character of Moses. God argues, on the contrary, with great patience and forbearance, and replies to what Moses had alleged relative to the merit of his own good works. Further, it is God, who says to Moses, that he must die on account of the sin of Adam: to which Moses answers, that he ought to be excepted, because he was superior in merit to Adam, Abraham, Isaac, &c. In the mean time, Samael, that is, the angel of death, whom

whom the Jews describe as the chief of the devils, rejoices at the approaching death of Moses. This is observed by Michael, who says to him, 'Thou wicked wretch, I grieve, and thou laughest.' Moses, after his request had been repeatedly refused, invokes heaven and earth, and all creatures around him, to intercede in his behalf. Joshua attempts to pray for him: but the devil stops Joshua's mouth, and represents to him, really in scripture style, the impropriety of such a prayer. The elders of the people, and with them all the children of Israel then offer to intercede for Moses: but their mouths are likewise stopped by a million eight hundred and forty thousand devils, which on a moderate calculation, make three devils to one man. After this, God commands the angel Gabriel, to fetch the soul of Moses: but Gabriel excuses himself, saying that Moses was too strong for him. Michael receives the same order, and excuses himself in the same manner, or, as other accounts say, under pretence that he had been the instructor of Moses, and therefore could not bear to see him die. But this last excuse, according to the Phetirath Moshe, was made by Zinghiel, the third angel, who received this command. Samael, that is, the devil, then offers his services; but God asks him, how he would take hold of Moses, whether by his Mouth, or by his hands, or by his feet, saying that every part of Moses was too holy for him to touch. The devil however insists on bringing the soul of Moses: yet he does not accuse him, for, on the contrary, he prizes him higher than Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The devil then approaches towards Moses to execute this voluntary commission: but, as soon as he sees the shining countenance of Moses, he is seized with a violent pain, like that of a woman in labour. Moses, instead of using the oriental salutation, 'Peace be with thee,' says to him in the words of Isaiah, ch. lvii. 21. (for in this work Moses frequently quotes Isaiah and the Psalms), 'There is no peace to the wicked.' The devil replies, that he was come by the order of God, to fetch his soul: but Moses deters him from the attempt by

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representing

representing his own strength and holiness: and saying, 'Go thou wicked wretch, I will not give thee my soul,' he affrights the devil in such a manner that he immediately retires. The devil then returns to God, and relates what had passed: and receives an order to go a second time. The devil answers, that he would go every where God commanded him, even into hell, and into fire, but not to Moses. This remonstrance however is of no avail, and he is obliged to go back again. But Moses, who sees him coming with a drawn sword, meets him with his miraculous rod, and gives him so severe a blow with it, that the devil is glad to escape. Lastly, God himself comes: and Moses, having then no further hopes, requests only that his soul may not be taken out of his body by the devil. This request is granted him. Zinghiel, Gabriel, and Michael then lay him on a bed: and the soul of Moses begins to dispute with God, and objects to its being taken out of a body, which was so pure and holy, that no fly dared to settle on it. But God kisses Moses, and with a kiss extracts his soul from his body. Upon this, God utters a heavy lamentation: and thus the story in the Phetirath Moshe ends, without any mention of a dispute about the burial of Moses's body. This last scene therefore, which was contained in the Greek book seen by Origen, is wanting in the Hebrew. But in both of these works, Michael, as well as the devil, expresses the same sentiments in respect to Moses: in both works the same spirit prevails: and the concluding scene which was contained in the Greek book, is nothing more than a continuation of the same story, which is contained in the Hebrew.

After what I have reported in the preceding paragraph, I seriously ask every impartial judge, whether that person could be an inspired writer, or an immediate disciple of him, who made a manifest distinction between the history of the Old Testament and the fabulous traditions of the Jews, who has quoted such a book as that, which I have just described, and selected from it a passage so ap-



parently fabulous. Various attempts have been made to remove this difficulty, but with very little success.

Origen removed it in the shortest way by pronouncing the 'Assumption of Moses' a work of authority, and by quoting this book in proof of the opinion, that the serpent, who seduced Eve, was possessed by the devil. But the example of Origen, who could easily explain away its absurdities by the aid of his allegorical interpretation, will hardly induce any modern critic to receive as divine a book not contained in the Hebrew canon, for which, and for which alone, we have the attestation of Christ.

Some other commentators say, that a quotation from an apocryphal book no more proves that St. Jude, who quoted it, believed it was a divine work, than St. Paul's quotations from Greek poets, or from the apocryphal books of Jannes and Jambres, from which he has taken the names of the Egyptian magicians, 2 Tim. iii. 8. But this argument is not in point: for the quotation in the Epistle of St. Jude is of a very different kind from those in the Epistles of St. Paul, not excepting that which he has made in 2 Tim. iii. 8. That Egyptian magicians opposed themselves to Moses we know from the account which Moses himself has given in the book of Exodus: and though their names are not recorded by him, the remembrance of them might have been preserved by the Jews through other means. That two of them were called Jannes and Jambres is a matter not incredible: and not only various Jewish writers speak of them, but likewise Numenius. The mention therefore of their names by St. Paul, even though his knowledge of them was derived from a book, which was not canonical, is nothing extraordinary; for that two of the Egyptian magicians, who endeavoured to counteract Moses, were called Jannes and Jambres, is a matter, which may be credited on mere human testimony. But the conversation of Michael with the devil, which is quoted in the Epistle of St. Jude, is a fact of a very different



different kind: for it lies without the circle of human experience, and therefore it cannot be attested by any man, unless he has either divine inspiration, or has intercourse with beings of a superior order. Consequently, whoever was the author of the apocryphal book, from which the quotation was made, his account cannot possibly command assent. Even if Jannes and Jambres were not the real names of two Egyptian forcerers, but were invented by the Jews of later ages, still St. Paul might have used the names, by which they were known in his time, in the same manner as we call the Greek version made at Alexandria by the name of Septuagint, though we do not believe in the fable of the seventy interpreters. No man could say that I acted with impropriety, if in conversation with Arabians I called Alexander the Great by the name of Dulcarnain, though that title was not given him till after his death. But if I quoted the travels of Moses, or the fall of the devil, as they are related in the Koran, and quoted them not only as facts, in which I believed, but as facts on which theological doctrines might be grounded, it is not probable that any man would assent to my argumentation.

Other commentators endeavour to remove the difficulty by saying that St. Jude took his account perhaps, not from the Greek book quoted by Origen, but from some authentic Hebrew book which is now lost, or from some respectable and credible tradition of the Jews. But the difficulty is to make it even probable, that any such authentic Hebrew book, or any such credible tradition existed in the first century. At that time the Jews had no other books, beside those contained in the Bible, which were antecedent to the Babylonish captivity: and mere oral tradition, relative to a fact supposed to have happened so many hundred years before the captivity, no rational man will consider as credible. If therefore St. Jude, instead of quoting a Greek book called the Assumption of Moses, had quoted a Hebrew book, in which the same story was related, still that Hebrew book would have been no better authority, than

the Greek. The language can make no difference in this case: and, unless we grant with Origen, that the *Αναληψις τῆς Μωσέως* was canonical, we cannot suppose, that a Hebrew book with this title was written by a prophet. But if it was not written by a prophet, or by a man who had supernatural information, we cannot give him credit for a relation of what is said and done in the region of spirits, especially when that relation so strongly favours of fable, and so ill agrees with the last chapter of Deuteronomy.

Finally, it is said, that in the apocryphal writings, and in the oral tradition of the Jews, some true accounts were intermixed with the fabulous, and hence it is inferred that St. Jude, by the aid of divine inspiration, might have known, that the story of the dispute, between Michael and the devil about Moses, was a pearl which lay buried in an heap of rubbish. Now that the Jewish fables were intermixed with some true facts, and that a writer, if he has divine inspiration, will distinguish them from the fabulous parts, no one will deny. But the difficulty is to make this principle apply to the present case. The dispute, between Michael and the devil about the body of Moses, has by no means the appearance of a true history: and the author of our Epistle has not even hinted that he knew it to be true by the aid of divine inspiration, or that he distinguished it from other Jewish traditions. On the contrary, he has introduced it as part of a story, with which his readers were already acquainted; he does not appear to have had any other authority for it, than they themselves had: nor does the part, which he has quoted, at all imply, either that he himself doubted, or that he wished his readers should doubt, of the other parts of it.

The truth of these arguments has been perceived by more than one commentator on the Epistle of St. Jude. In order therefore, to remove at once all objections to a quotation from an apocryphal book, they have given to Jude 9, a mystical interpretation; and by thus distorting its meaning have endeavoured to shew, that the quota-

tion was taken from a part of the Old Testament. According to their explanation the ‘body of Moses’ denotes the whole Jewish nation, in the same manner as the whole assemblage of Christians is sometimes called the body of Christ: and Jude 9, is nothing more than an illusion to the vision, in the third chapter of Zechariah, in which they say the whole Jewish nation is accused before the Lord in the person of Joshua, the high priest. And Vitringa, on the supposition, that St. Jude really alluded to this vision, proposes to alter the body of Moses to the body of Joshua, and instead of *περι τοῦ Μωσέως σώματος* to read *περι τοῦ Ἰησοῦ σώματος*; that the passage may be better adapted to the vision of Zechariah, and that the harsh expression ‘body of Moses,’ in the sense of ‘Jewish nation,’ may be avoided. Now a conjecture, which is supported by no authority, and is adopted merely to support a previously assumed hypothesis, would be entitled to no credit, even if it suited the context, and involved no difficulty. But in the present instance the proposed alteration is to me at least unintelligible; for in the third chapter of Zechariah, Joshua appears indeed before the angel of the Lord, but no mention is made of a dispute about his body. Setting aside therefore this arbitrary and forced alteration, which is not generally adopted by the defenders of a mystical interpretation of Jude 9, I will state the objections which may be made to their opinion, that St. Jude alluded to the vision of Zechariah.

1. In the whole of this vision there is nothing, which has the least similarity to Jude 9, except the expression, ‘The Lord rebuke thee.’ The name of Michael is not once mentioned in it; the unnamed angel, who appears in it, is not one of the disputants, but the judge: and the person, whom the devil resists, is Joshua.

2. There is nothing in this vision, which is at all suitable to the purpose, for which St. Jude has quoted the dispute of Michael, as an example of modesty, and as a proof of his doctrine, that one ought not to speak evil of dignities, but leave judgement to the Lord. Now



in the vision of Zechariah, since the unnamed angel is represented, not as one of the contending parties, but as judge, this modesty would be very ill placed; for a judge must either decide without respect to persons, or not decide at all. And if by the unnamed angel, in the vision of Zechariah, is meant the uncreated angel, or the Son of God, as is generally, and not without reason, supposed, diffidence in judgement is still less suitable to his character. For if the Son of God ventured not to pronounce judgement on the devil, but left it to the Father, there must be an essential difference between the Godhead of the Father, and the Godhead of the Son. Whoever therefore explains Jude 9, as having reference to the vision in Zechariah, undermines, though without being aware of it, the doctrine of Christ's divinity. But I do not think that the Epistle of St. Jude deserves to be vindicated at the expence of a doctrine, which is clearly revealed in the Bible.

3. The explanation of the 'body of Moses' as a mystical appellation of the children of Israel, and that too in a passage, where the context does not lead to any such interpretation is hardly admissible: and I cannot suppose that if St. Jude had meant the children of Israel, he would have denoted them by so harsh a figurative expression as that of the 'body of Moses.' That the Christian church is sometimes called from the head and founder of our religion, who still lives and protects us, the body of Christ, especially in those passages, in which the connexion explains the meaning of this figure, is no reason why the Jewish nation should be called the body of Moses, in a place where no mention had been made of the Israelites, and at a time when Moses was long dead, and had ceased to be their head and protector. Nor is there any thing in the third chapter of Zechariah, to which St. Jude is supposed to allude, which could give rise to such a figurative expression; for the name of Moses is not once mentioned in it.

4. As the Jews had undoubtedly a tradition that Michael and the devil disputed at the death of Moses,  
and



and the story was related in the Greek book, which Origen saw, it is very difficult to give any other than a literal interpretation to the words *σωμα Μωσως* in the Epistle of St. Jude, or to shew that he did not allude to the well-known Jewish tradition.

Some other commentators, who interpret *σωμα Μωσως* figuratively, explain it as denoting the five books of Moses, and contend that the dispute, of which St. Jude speaks, is the dispute of Christ with the devil, at the time of his temptation in the wilderness. Now the second and fourth of the objections, which I made to the preceding interpretation may be equally applied to this: and also the three following objections may be made to it in particular.

1. In the temptation of Christ by the devil, no dispute arises about the books of Moses. It is true that Christ quotes two passages from the Pentateuch, as the devil quotes from the Psalms: but a quotation from a book cannot be considered as a dispute about (*περι*) it, that is, as a dispute about its authority.

2. Michael cannot denote Christ, for Michael is the name of a created angel. But, even if Michael be interpreted, though there is no ground for any such interpretation<sup>1</sup>, of the uncreated angel, or the Son of God, it is still an improper appellation of Christ, when regard is had to his human nature. And, whatever explanation the word Michael may admit, it is hardly credible that St. Jude, if he had really meant Jesus Christ, would have called him by any other, than his real and proper name. At any rate he would not have given him a name, which belonged to another being.

3. The expression 'The Lord rebuke thee,' which St. Jude quotes, does not occur in the history of Christ's temptation.

After

<sup>1</sup> They who appeal to the composition of the Hebrew word Michael, which signifies, 'Who is like God,' and thence argue, that it is a very proper title for him, who is equal to God, are not aware that this very name is given in the Old Testament to several men, and therefore does not admit of the application, which they have made of it. See Simonis Onomasticon Vet. Test. p. 504. where ten different persons are mentioned, who bore the name of Michael.

After all then, we must conclude with Origen, that St. Jude derived his account of the dispute between Michael and the devil about the body of Moses, from an apocryphal book. And I know no other method of vindicating the quotation, than by supposing that St. Jude considered the whole story, not as a real fact, which either he himself believed, or which he required his readers to believe, but merely as an instructive fable, which served to illustrate the doctrine, which he himself inculcated, namely, that we ought not to speak evil of dignities. With this view he might quote from the Assumption of Moses the conversation of Michael, as an example of diffidence worthy of imitation, without intending to assert that the story was true, or that the book from which he quoted was of divine authority. This is the only vindication, of which in my opinion St. Jude's quotation is capable: but whether it be a satisfactory one, I leave to be determined by the reader.

To the doctrine, which St. Jude inculcates by this quotation, that we ought not to speak evil of dignities, not even of the fallen angels, but that we should leave judgment to God, I have no objection. And I really think, that they transgress the bounds of propriety, who make it their business either in the pulpit or in their writings, to represent the devil as an object of detestation, since, notwithstanding his fall, he is still a being of a superior order. This reminds me of a certain Oriental sect, which Niebuhr met with in the neighbourhood of the river Zab in Assyria, and which for the same reason as that, which I have just assigned, will not suffer any one to speak evil of the devil. It is said that many of this sect are to be found also in several places on this side of the Tigris, especially on mount Singar. Whether they are Christians, or Jews, or Mohammedans is uncertain. They call themselves Jesideans<sup>k</sup>, and Dauasfin<sup>l</sup>; and relate that the founder of their sect was a very holy person, named Shaich Ade. Now, as Addus, the  
Apostle

يزيد<sup>k</sup>

<sup>l</sup> Perhaps from دواسبن prudentes.

Apostle of the Syrians, preached the Gospel in those very countries, in which the Jesideans reside, and Adæus has been supposed by some critics to have been the author of our Epistle, curiosity is naturally excited to know something more of this sect<sup>m</sup>, especially whether they maintain other unusual doctrines, which are delivered in this Epistle.

Lastly, beside the quotation, which St. Jude has made in the 9th verse, relative to the dispute between Michael and the devil, he has another quotation ver. 14, 15. likewise from an apocryphal book, called the ‘Prophecies of Enoch,’ or, if not from any written work, from oral tradition. Now, should it be granted that Enoch was a prophet, though it is not certain that he was, yet as none of his prophecies are recorded in the Old Testament, no one could possibly know what they were. It is manifest therefore that the book, called ‘The Prophecies of Enoch,’ was a mere Jewish forgery, and that too a very unfortunate one, since in all human probability the use of letters was unknown in the time of Enoch, and consequently he could not have left behind him any written prophecies. It is true that an inspired writer might have known through the medium of divine information, what Enoch had prophesied, without having recourse to any written work on this subject. But St. Jude, in the place where he speaks of Enoch’s prophecies, does not speak of them as prophecies which had been made known to him by a particular revelation; on the contrary, he speaks of them in such a manner, as implies that his readers were already acquainted with them. Lardner has taken great pains to vindicate this quotation of St. Jude: and as I am unable to say more in its defence than he has done, I must refer the reader to what he has said in his Supplement to the Credibility of the Gospel History, Vol. III. p. 338—343.

<sup>m</sup> What is related of them in Niebuhr’s Travels, Vol. II. p. 344—348. deserves particularly to be examined, though it did not occur to Niebuhr to compare their tenets with the Epistle of St. Jude.

## S E C T. V.

*Result of the inquiry instituted in the preceding sections; and the question in debate brought to a final issue.*

FROM the account, which has been already given, it appears, that we have very little reason for placing the Epistle of St. Jude among the sacred writings. If the ancient church had decided positively in its favour, this decision would not convince me that the Epistle of St. Jude was inspired<sup>n</sup>: but the ancient church is so divided on this subject, that whoever is guided by it must at least suspect, or rather reject the Epistle of St. Jude. And if we are directed in our judgement by the contents of the Epistle, we shall have still no inducement to believe that it is a sacred and divine work.

But before the question in debate can be brought to a final issue, we must return to the inquiry instituted in the first section of this chapter, relative to the person and character of the author. If the Jude, who wrote this Epistle, was the Apostle Jude, the brother of the younger Apostle James, we must place it without further hesitation among the Apostolic writings, and pronounce it canonical. And in this case, we must either believe in the story of the dispute between Michael and the devil, and in the prophecies of Enoch, or admit that the arguments, which have been alleged against the two quotations in the Epistle of St. Jude, affect the infallibility of the Apostles themselves. On the other hand, if the author of this Epistle was not Jude, the Apostle, but Jude the brother in law of Jesus, I can see no reason why we should account it canonical, since the brethren of Jesus not only were not Apostles, but did not even believe in him during his life time. That St. James, another

<sup>n</sup> See what was said on the testimony of the ancient church to the inspiration of a book of the New Testament, in the first Volume of this Introduction, ch. iii. sect. 2.



another of Christ's brethren became afterwards one of the pillars of the church, and was placed on a level with the Apostles, will not warrant us to conclude the same of his brother Jude, of whom we know nothing more than, that he was a son of Joseph by a former wife. But this relationship alone is no argument that he was inspired, and is no reason why his Epistle, which contains accounts apparently fabulous, and which was suspected by the ancient church, should be received as a rule of faith and manners.

I cannot therefore acknowledge that this Epistle is canonical. And I have really some doubts whether it be not even a forgery, made in the name of Jude, by some person, who borrowed the chief part of his materials from the second Epistle of St. Peter, and added some few of his own.

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## CHAP. XXX.

### OF THE FIRST EPISTLE OF ST. JOHN.

#### SECT. I.

##### *Of the time, when this Epistle was written\*.*

**I**T is difficult to determine the precise year, when this Epistle was written, because our historical accounts are defective on this subject, and the Epistle itself contains nothing, which can lead to so exact a determination. Some commentators have ascribed to it so late a date, as 91, 92, 98, or 99: and Lardner, though he admits that

\* I do not enter into any inquiry concerning its authenticity, because it has been universally admitted from the earliest ages; and the style of it is manifestly the style of St. John.

that the exact date is not known, is still of opinion, that it was written after the destruction of Jerusalem. The reason, which he gives for this opinion is, ‘that the arguments alleged, for proving it to have been written sooner, are not satisfactory<sup>p</sup>.’ Now, if I admit that these premises are true, still the inference, which Lardner deduces from them, will not be valid: for we must not argue that, because a demonstration is unsatisfactory, the proposition itself is false. The only admissible conclusion therefore from these premises would be, that it is uncertain, whether the Epistle was written before, or after the destruction of Jerusalem. Lardner indeed adds, ‘perhaps some things may occur, affording hints of a later date: but till these things are pointed out, no argument can be grounded on them.’

That several of the reasons alleged in favour of the opinion, that this Epistle was written before the destruction of Jerusalem, are not so convincing, when closely examined, as they appear to be at first sight, I will not deny. Grotius appeals to ch. ii. 18. where St. John says, *εσχάτη ὥρα ἐστὶ*, by which Grotius understands the last hour of the existence of the Jewish nation. It is true that *εσχάτη ὥρα* cannot denote the last hour of the existence of the world, which has continued to exist seventeen hundred years after this Epistle was written: and it is likewise true that some other explanations of *εσχάτη ὥρα* are attended with great difficulty; for instance, that which is given by Morus, who interprets it of the fourth Monarchy, or the Roman empire, in which the Antichrist was to come. Now it is hardly credible that St. John alluded in this passage to the prophecy of Daniel, and thence borrowed his computation of time. In the whole New Testament I know of no clear and indisputable passage, in which the Roman empire is called ‘the last time:’ and in the present instance this expression surely cannot denote the Roman empire, because St. John says, that the coming of the Antichrist was a token of this ‘last time.’ Every one knew, that  
the

the Roman empire, or Daniel's fourth monarchy then existed : and therefore St. John could have no need to point out to his readers any token of its arrival. The interpretation would be more specious, if St. John had been speaking of such heretics, as were predecessors of the Pope of Rome : of the Essenes, for instance, from whom, according to St. Paul, the great apostacy was to take its rise, and who are still considered as saints by the Romish Church. But St. John speaks of Heretics, who are condemned by the person called the Roman Antichrist, and whose errors are foreign to his. Nor is Wolf's explanation more satisfactory, who says, that *εσχάτη ὥρα* is equivalent to the Hebrew *אחרית הימים*, 'the end of the days,' and that this expression in the Hebrew Bible denotes the period of the New Covenant. For though some Jews apply this expression to the time of the Messiah, the application is wholly arbitrary, since it denotes, not a particular, but any future period, as appears from the use of it in Gen. xlix. 1. Jerem. xlviii. 47. xlix. 39. And yet I hardly think, that the interpretation of Grotius is right : for the last hour of the existence of Jerusalem was a matter, which did not immediately concern the greatest part of St. John's readers, who were probably heathen converts, since the Gnostic errors, which St. John combats, prevailed chiefly among the heathen converts, and not among the converts from Judaism, who were infected with Ebionite errors. Nor do I see how St. John could argue from the many Antichrists, by which he means Gnostics, to the approaching destruction of Jerusalem. For, though Christ himself had foretold, Matth. xxiv. 24. that many false Christs would appear, previous to that event, yet he understood impostors, who would assume to themselves the character of a Messiah, whereas St. John's Antichrists were false teachers in the Christian Church, and probably Gnostic adversaries of the Apostles.

Perhaps therefore it is most adviseable to interpret 'the last hour,' 1 John ii. 18. as well as 'the last days,' 2 Pet. iii. 3. in which St. Peter says, that scoffers will

will come, of the last days of the Apostles, or of the latter part of the Apostolic age. The Apostles probably foresaw that the Church would not remain undisturbed, but that in their latter days false teachers would arise, whom they have sometimes called Antichrists, because false teachers in fact oppose Christ. But if we adopt this explanation, the inference, which Grotius deduced from the passage, ch. ii. 18, namely, that the Epistle was written before the destruction of Jerusalem, will cease to be valid. For the latter part of the Apostolic age, though it may be considered as commencing before the destruction of Jerusalem, especially if it be true, that St. Peter meant it in the above-quoted passage, lasted as long as St. John lived : and therefore the expression used by St. John in the place to which appeal is made, leaves it undetermined, whether he wrote before or after Jerusalem was destroyed.

Yet, though Grotius's argument does not appear to be valid, I still think, for another reason, that the opinion itself is highly probable, and that the Epistle was really written before the destruction of Jerusalem. St. John's Gospel was opposed to heretics, who maintained the same tenets with those, who are opposed in this Epistle. In the Gospel he has confuted them by argument : in the Epistle he expresses only his disapprobation of them. I conclude therefore, that this Epistle was written before his Gospel ; for if he had already given a complete confutation, when he wrote this Epistle, he would have thought it unnecessary to have again declared the falsity.



## S E C T. II.

*Of the persons, to whom this Epistle was written.*

THIS question is still more difficult to decide, than the preceding. In the Latin version it was formerly called the Epistle of St. John to the Parthians: and this title was adopted by some of the ancient fathers, and in modern times has been defended by Grotius. But if St. John had intended this Epistle for the use of the Parthians, he would hardly have written it in Greek, but would have used either the language of the country, or, if he was unacquainted with it, would have written at least in Syriac, which was the language of the learned in the Parthian empire, and especially of the Christians. We know from the history of Manes, that even the learned in that country were, for the most part, unacquainted with the Greek language: for to Manes, though he united literature with genius, his adversaries objected, that he understood only the barbarous Syriac. And that a Greek book would not have been understood in the Parthian empire, appears likewise from what Josephus says in the Preface to his history of the Jewish war, § 2, where he declares, that a work intended for the Parthian Jews, must be written, not in Greek, but in Hebrew. However, it is worth while to examine, whence the superscription ‘ad. Parthos’ took its rise. Whiston conjectures that an ancient Greek superscription of this Epistle was *προς παρθενους*, because the Epistle is chiefly addressed to uncorrupted Christians, that this title was falsely copied *προς παρθους*, whence was derived the Latin superscription ‘ad Parthos.’ But this conjecture is without foundation: for since the faithful are not called in a single instance throughout the whole Epistle by the name of *παρθενους*, it is very improbable that the title *προς παρθενους* was ever affixed to it. I would rather suppose therefore, that the frequent use in this Epistle  
of

of the words ‘Light’ and ‘Darkness,’ terms, which occur in the Persian philosophy, and on the same occasions, as those, on which St. John has used them, gave rise to the opinion, that St. John wrote it with a view of correcting the abuses of the Persian philosophy: whence it was inferred that he designed it for the use of the Christians in the Parthian empire. And that St. John really designed his Epistle as a warning to those Christians who were in danger of being infected with Zoroastrian principles, is very probable<sup>1</sup>: though the language of the Epistle will not permit us to place St. John’s readers in a country to the east of the Euphrates.

Lightfoot supposes that the Epistle was written to the Corinthians: but he has not supported his opinion by any arguments. Benson thinks, that it was sent to the Christians, who resided in Galilee, a short time before the destruction of Jerusalem: but, as St. John, ch. v. 21. cautions his readers against idolatry<sup>2</sup>, they hardly resided in Galilee, where idolatry was not practised.

Lampe, who appeals to Theodoret, contends<sup>3</sup>, that it was not designed for any particular community, but that it was written for the use of Christians of every denomination. And this is really the most probable opinion, since the Epistle contains no reference to any individual church. The only difficulty attending this opinion lies in the name ‘Epistle,’ because the frequent use, in an Epistle, of the terms Light and Darkness, taken in the Persian sense of these words, seems to imply that it was written to persons of a particular description. But if we call it a treatise, this difficulty will cease: and in fact the name ‘Epistle’ is improperly applied to it, since it has nothing, which entitles it to this appellation.

It

<sup>1</sup> The Gnostics, against whom St. John wrote, probably made use of Zoroastrian terms, though their doctrines were not wholly the same as those of the Zoroastrian philosophy.

<sup>2</sup> In the following section I shall endeavour to shew that this passage applies to the Gnostics.

<sup>3</sup> Prol. in Evangel. Johannis, p. 105.

It does not begin with the salutation, which is used in Greek Epistles, and with which St. John himself begins his two last Epistles: nor does it contain any salutations, though they are found in almost all the Epistles of the Apostles. It is true that St. John addresses his readers in the second person: but this mode of writing is frequently adopted in books, and especially in prefaces. For instance in Wolf's Elements of Mathematics, the reader is addressed throughout in the second person. I consider therefore that, which is commonly called the first Epistle of St. John, as a book or treatise, in which the Apostle declared to the whole world his disapprobation of the doctrines maintained by Cerinthus and the Gnostics. However, as I do not think it worth while to dispute about words, I have retained the usual title, and have called it the first Epistle of St. John.

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### S E C T. III.

#### *Of the contents, and design of this Epistle.*

**T**HAT the design of this Epistle was to combat the doctrine delivered by certain false teachers, appears from ch. ii. 18—26. iii. 7. iv. 1—3.: and what this false doctrine was, may be inferred from the counter-doctrine delivered by St. John, ch. v. 1—6. The Apostle here asserts that ‘Jesus is the Christ,’ and that he was the Christ, ‘not by water only, but by water and blood.’ Now these words, which in themselves are not very intelligible, become perfectly clear, if we consider them as opposed to the doctrine of Cerinthus, who asserted that Jesus was by birth a mere man, but that the Æon, Christ, descended on him at his baptism, and left him before his death. But if what St. John says, ch. v. 1—6. was opposed to Cerinthus, the Antichrists

of whom he speaks ch. ii. 18, 19, and who, according to ver. 22. denied that Jesus was the Christ, as also the false prophets mentioned ch. iv. 1—3. must be Cerinthians or at least Gnostics. That they were neither Jews, nor heathens, may be inferred from ch. ii. 19. where St. John says, ‘they went out from *us*.’ Further, he describes them ch. ii. 18. as persons, who had lately appeared in the world. But this description suits neither Jews, nor heathens, who, when this Epistle was written, had not lately begun to deny, that Jesus was the Christ. Lastly, in the same verse he describes them as tokens of the last time, saying: ‘as ye have heard that Antichrist shall come, even now there are many Antichrists, *whereby* we know that it is the last time. But this inference could not be drawn from the refusal of the Jews, to acknowledge that Jesus was the Messiah.

Now as soon as we perceive, that the position ‘Jesus is the Christ,’ is a counterposition against Cerinthus, we may infer, as I have already observed, that the Antichrists who denied that Jesus was the Christ, or who denied that Christ had appeared in the flesh, were Cerinthians: or perhaps the latter were Docetes. It is therefore highly probable, that the whole Epistle, which in various places discovers an opposition to false teachers, was written against Cerinthians, or at least against Gnostics and Magi. A proposition can never be completely understood, unless we know the author’s design in delivering it. For instance, ‘God is light, and in him is no darkness,’ appears to contain a tautology, if we consider it, as a detached dogma: and if it be considered as an admonitory proposition, it may be thought to contain a severe reproof. But if we regard it in a polemical view, it will present itself under a very different form. This Epistle abounds with exhortations: but no man who wishes to understand it, will be satisfied, without asking the following questions. Why did St. John give these admonitions? Why has he so frequently repeated them? Why has he admonished, if he thought admoni-

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tion necessary, merely in general terms, to holiness and brotherly love? And why has he not sometimes descended to particulars, as other Apostles have done? An answer to these questions will throw great light on the Epistle; and this light I will endeavour to procure for the reader, by pointing out the several propositions, which, in my opinion, are laid down in opposition to Gnostic errors.

1. In the first chapter, the four first verses are opposed to the following assertion of the Gnostics: ‘that the Apostles did not deliver the doctrine of Jesus, as they had received it, but made additions to it, especially in the commandments, which were termed legal, whereas they themselves (the Gnostics) retained the genuine and uncorrupted mystery’.<sup>u</sup> St. John therefore says, ‘that he declared that, which was from the beginning, which he himself had seen and heard:’ that is, that he taught the doctrine of Christ, as it was originally delivered, as he had heard it from Christ’s own mouth, whose person he had seen and felt, and that he made no additions of his own, but only reported as a faithful witness. In like manner he appeals ch. ii. 13, 14. to the elder Christians, whom he calls fathers, ‘because they knew him, that was from the beginning,’ that is, because they knew how Christ had taught from the beginning<sup>w</sup>: and ver. 24. he says, ‘Let that abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning.’ Further, he says, ch. ii. 7. ‘Brethren, I write no new commandment unto you, but an old commandment, which ye had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word, which ye have heard from the beginning.’ In the next verse, he adds,  
‘Again

<sup>u</sup> Dicentes, se, non solum presbyteris, sed et apostolis superiores, sinceram invenisse veritatem, apostolos autem admiscuisse ea, quæ sunt legalia salvatoris verba:—se incontaminate et sincere absconditum scire mysterium. Irenæus adv. Hæres. Lib. iii. c. 2.

<sup>w</sup> The expression ‘from the beginning’ cannot denote ‘the beginning of the world,’ in reference to God’s eternity, for St. John appeals only to old men, as knowing that, which was from the beginning: but God’s eternity can no more be testified by the oldest man, than by the youngest child.

‘ Again a new commandment I write unto you, which thing is true in him and in you, because the darkness is past, and the light now shineth.’ Now Christ himself had given his disciples a commandment, which he called a new commandment: and this was, ‘ that they should love one another\*.’ The term ‘ new commandment’ St. John borrowed therefore from Christ: but in the present instance he appears to have applied it to a different subject, because the special command, which Christ gave to his disciples, that they should love each other, and which he called a new commandment, could not be well called an old commandment, being very different from the general commandment, that we should love our neighbour. St. John therefore probably meant that the commandment of love and sanctification was no new commandment, as the Gnostics pretended, but was the old commandment of Christ, which the Christians had heard from the beginning. It was indeed become a new commandment, in consequence of the false doctrines, which then prevailed: or rather, it appeared to be so, because the Gnostics had endeavoured to banish it from their system of theology. But whether a new, or an old commandment, St. John thought proper to enforce it.

2. The Gnostics, who contended, that those commandments, which were legal, were not given by Christ, but were added by the Apostles without his authority, counteracted by so doing, the whole doctrine of sanctification. St. John therefore devotes the greatest part of his Epistle to the confirmation and enforcement of this doctrine. In the first chapter, ver. 5—7. he asserts, as a principal part of the message, which he had heard from Christ, that no one, who walks not in the light, has fellowship with God. In the three following verses he limits this proposition in such a manner, as was necessary, in arguing with an adversary: and ch. ii. 1. 2. he removes the objection, that, according to his doctrine, a Christian, who was guilty of wilful sins, lost thereby

\* John xiii. 34.

thereby all hopes of salvation. He then maintains, ver. 3—5. and apparently in allusion to the word *γνῶσις* (knowledge), the favourite term of the Gnostics, that he who boasted of profound knowledge, and at the same time rejected the commandments of Christ, had not a real, but only a pretended knowledge: and that in him only the love of God is perfected (*τετελειωται*), who keeps God's word. The expression *τετελειωται* is a term, which was used in the schools of the philosophers, and applied to the scholars called *esoterici*, who had made a considerable progress in the inner school. Now the Gnostics were, in their opinion, scholars of this description: but since they, whose imaginary system of theology annuls the commands of God, are so far from being perfect, that they are not even beginners in the science, St. John very properly refuses to admit their pretensions, and opposes to them others, who were perfect in a different way, and who were more justly entitled to the appellation. With respect to the expressions 'keeping the commandments of God,' or 'not keeping his commandments,' it must be observed, that, when used in a polemical work, they denote, not merely the observance or violation of God's commands in our own practice, but the teaching of others, that they are to be observed or rejected. What St. John says, ver. 7, 8. has been already explained in the preceding paragraph.

The whole of the third chapter, and a great part of the fourth, are devoted to the same doctrine of sanctification, on which I have to make the following remarks:

When St. John says, ch. iii. 7. 'Let no man deceive you, he who doeth righteousness, is righteous,' he probably intends, not merely to deliver a precept, but to oppose the doctrine of those, who asserted, that a man, though he sinned, might be righteous in respect to his spiritual soul, because sin proceeded only from the material

\* If the explanation, which I have here given of 1 John ii. 3—5. had been properly considered, the Lutheran divines at the beginning of this century would not have been so divided about the passage, and would not have applied it in the controversy on the doctrine of regeneration, to which it has no reference.



terial body. A similar observation may be applied to ver. 4. 'whosoever committeth sin, transgresseth also the law,' which, considered by itself, appears to be an identical proposition, but, when considered as an assertion opposed to the Gnostics, it is far from being superfluous, because, evident as it appears to be, they virtually denied it. From the passage above-quoted from the works of Irenæus, we have seen that they rejected the legal commandments, as parts of the Christian religion, which were not warranted by the authority of Christ: consequently they denied, that sin was a transgression of the law. Further, it was consistent with their principles, to regard sins as diseases: for they believed in a metempsychosis, and imagined, that the souls of men were confined in their present bodies, as in a prison, and as a punishment for having offended in the regions above. According to this system, the violent and irregular passions of anger, hatred, lust, &c. were tortures for the soul, they were diseases, but not punishable transgressions of the law. I will not assert, that all, who believed in a transmigration of souls, argued in this manner: but some of them certainly did so, and against these it was not superfluous to write, 'Whosoever committeth sin, transgresseth also the law, for sin is the transgression of the law.'

The love of the brethren, which St. John enforced as a chief commandment, is generally understood of that special love, which Christ commanded his disciples to have toward each other<sup>z</sup>. But I rather think that St. John means the love of our neighbour in general, which Christ commanded, as comprehending the half of the law: for this general love St. John might very properly call the love of our brother, since God has created us all, and is our common father. Besides, as St. John calls Cain, Abel's brother, ch. iii. 12. he could not intend to signify by this term a person of the same religious sentiments. Nor would it have been consistent with candour, to have censured the Gnostics, for not having

<sup>z</sup> John xiii. 34.



having Christian brotherly love toward St. John, and other true believers: for in this particular sense they were not brethren, and St. John himself in his second Epistle, ver. 10. forbids the exercise of Christian brotherly love toward those, who teach false doctrines. I believe therefore, that the brotherly love, of which St. John speaks in the third chapter of this Epistle, is not confined to that special love, which we owe to those who are allied to us by religion, but denotes the love of our neighbour in general. Nor do I except even the 16th verse, where some think that St. John would require too much, if he meant brotherly love in general, or charity toward all men. But are there not certain cases, in which it is our duty to hazard and even sacrifice our lives, in order to rescue our neighbour? Is not this duty performed by the soldier? And is it not performed by him, who visits those, that are infected with contagious diseases? It is true, that this is not a duty which every man owes in all cases to his neighbour: but then, on the other hand, is it not a duty, which every man owes in all cases to his spiritual brother? Nor was it St. John's design so much to enforce this duty, and to recommend the exercise of it, as to argue from the acknowledgement of this duty in certain cases, to the necessity of performing the less painful duty of supporting our brethren in distress by a participation of our temporal possessions. But though I believe, that in the third chapter St. John speaks of the love of our neighbour in general, I do not mean to affirm that, he no where understands that special love which Christians owe one to another, of which we meet with an instance in ch. v. 1. 2.

With respect to the moral conduct of the Gnostics, against whom St. John wrote, we may infer therefore, that the Apostle found more reason to censure them, for their want of charity toward their neighbour, than for dissoluteness or debauchery. This want of charity they probably displayed by a hatred of the true believers.

What St. John says, ch. v. 3. that God's commandments are not grievous,' appears in the clearest light,

when we consider it as opposed to the Gnostics, to whom the divine commandments, as delivered by the Apostles, appeared to be too legal.

3. St. John declares, ch. i. 5. as the message which he had heard from Christ, 'that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.' Now, if this proposition had then been as generally admitted, as it is at present, there could have been no necessity for declaring it at the very beginning of the Epistle, with so much energy, to be the grand message of Christ. We may reasonably infer therefore, that it was opposed to certain persons, who delivered a contrary doctrine. Further, the words 'Light' and 'Darkness,' which are here applied to the Deity in a manner, which is not usual in the Bible, remind us of the technical terms used by the Persian Magi, and afterwards by the Manicheans. It is true, that in the Bible we meet with the expressions, 'works of the light,' 'children of the light,' 'to walk in the light,' and others of the same kind: but in these instances the term 'light' is not synonymous to 'holiness,' works of the light denoting nothing more, than works, which no man need be ashamed to perform openly, and in the face of the whole world. This explanation of the word 'light,' is inapplicable in the proposition 'God is light,' because there would be an impropriety in representing God, either as fearing, or not fearing, to act in the face of the whole world. St. John therefore uses the term 'light,' as equivalent to holiness.

Now the Gnostics admitted that the Supreme Being was perfectly holy, and pure light<sup>a</sup>: but they denied that the Supreme Being was the God, whom the Jews and the Christians worshipped. For the Jews and the Christians worshipped the Creator of the world: and the Gnostics asserted that the Creator of the world was either a spirit of darkness, or, if he was a spirit of light, that he was not free from darkness.

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<sup>a</sup> They appear however to have taken the word light in a literal and physical sense.

From ch. ii. 23. where St. John says, that he who denies the son, rejects also the father, it appears that his adversaries did not deny the father in positive terms, since the Apostle argues only, that they virtually did so by denying the son. Now the Gnostics did not positively deny the father of Christ, whom they allowed to be the Supreme Being: but then they did not allow that he was the Creator. The terms therefore ‘God,’ and the ‘Father of Christ,’ though they denote in reality the same person, must not be considered as having precisely the same import: since the adversaries of St. John admitted, that the father of Christ was the Supreme Being, and pure light, but denied that the Creator, who is in fact God, was light without darkness.

4. In some places, especially ch. iv. 2. 3. St. John opposes false teachers of another description, namely, those who denied that Christ was come in the flesh. Now they, who denied this, were not Cerinthians, but another kind of Gnostics, called Docetes. For, as on the one hand Cerinthus maintained, that Jesus was a mere, and therefore real, man, the Docetes on the other hand contended that he was an incorporeal phantom, in which the *Æon* Christ, or the divine nature, presented itself to mankind. Ch. i. 1. ‘our hands have handled,’ appears likewise to be opposed to this error of the Docetes.

5. In ch. v. 1—6. the expressions ‘Jesus the Christ,’ and ‘Jesus the son of God,’ are manifestly used as synonymous. But in our systems of theology the word ‘Christ’ is used to denote the office of our Saviour, and the expression, ‘son of God,’ to denote his divine nature. Consequently we use one of these two expressions in a sense, which is different from that, in which it is here used by St. John. Some writers therefore, who have observed this, have proposed to alter the meaning, which we ascribe to the term ‘son of God,’ and to explain this term, as well as the word Christ, as equivalent to Messiah, and expressive of our Saviour’s office. But in my opinion we shall be better able to explain the  
Epistle



Epistle of St. John, if we take the term ‘son of God’ in its usual sense, and ascribe to the word ‘Christ’ a meaning different from that, which it has in our theology. For the Gnostics, against whom St. John wrote, did not deny the divine nature and the divine mission of Jesus: but they asserted, especially Cerinthus, that Christ was the personal name of the *Æon*, or divine nature, which, according to their system, accompanied Jesus from the time of his baptism, and to which the voice from heaven, ‘this is my beloved son,’ related. When St. John therefore uses the terms ‘Son of God’ and ‘Christ,’ as synonymous, it is evident that he does not take them in the Jewish sense of these expressions, but in the sense, in which his Gnostic adversaries denied, that Jesus was the Christ. In short, I believe that the word Christ, as used by St. John, ch. v. 1—6. denotes, not our Saviour’s office, but his divine nature. To confute the Gnostics it was necessary to argue with them in their own terms: but the word ‘Christ’ as used by the Gnostics, was not equivalent to the word Messiah, as used by the Jews, but denoted a divine nature, or, as they called it, an *Æon*.

6. St. John in several parts of this Epistle speaks of persons, whom he calls ‘the world.’ Now in modern sermons this appellation is commonly used to denote those, who in the language of our theology, are not regenerate. But we can hardly explain St. John’s meaning from our present use of this term. It appears to me rather that St. John used it, to denote the adversaries, against whom he wrote. For the Jews called the heathens in general the nations of the world<sup>b</sup>: and the Gnostics might not improperly be called heathens, since they brought a system of heathenism into the church of Christ.

If this explanation be admitted, ch. iv. 4. may be paraphrased in the following manner: ‘God, who dwelleth among us, and sheweth his power by the wonderful works,

<sup>b</sup> This expression is used also in the New Testament, for instance, Luke xii. 30. to denote the heathens.



works, which are the seal of the Apostolic church, is greater than the God, who dwelleth among the Gnostics, and performeth no such wonderful works.' According to this interpretation  $\delta \epsilon \nu \tau \omega \kappa \omicron \sigma \mu \omega$  signifies, not the devil, as is generally supposed, but the pretended supreme being of the Gnostics, who was in fact a non-entity. The next verse likewise may be paraphrased: 'They belong, not to the church, but to the heathens, for their doctrine is only an improved heathenism, and on that account the heathens listen to them.' Again, ch. 4. 5. may be paraphrased thus. 'Our victory over the heathens is our faith in the son of God. We triumph, not by force, and persecution, or by the conversion of every unbeliever: but this is our triumph, that we have the true faith of the son of God.'

The explanation which I have here given of the word  $\kappa \omicron \sigma \mu \omega$ , I do not mean to apply in every passage of this Epistle: for I confine it to those places, in which St. John uses it to denote his adversaries.

7. The doctrines, which St. John has delivered in this Epistle, he has not supported, either by arguments drawn from reason, or by quotations from the Old Testament: for neither of them were necessary, since the bare assertion of an Apostle of Christ is sufficient authority. It is true, that in one respect this Epistle has less energy than St. John's Gospel: because in his Gospel he warrants his doctrines by the speeches of Christ. But then, on the other hand, St. John declares in this Epistle, ch. iii. 24—iv. 4. v. 14—16. that God sent his spirit to the Apostolic church, and heard their prayers. And it is evident that St. John alludes to the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost, and to the miraculous powers obtained by prayer.

8. The close of the Epistle, 'keep yourselves from idols,' has no immediate connexion with the preceding discourse. I am therefore in doubt, whether St. John meant to warn his readers against taking part in heathen sacrifices, which was allowed by those Gnostics, who are

called Nicolaites in the Apocalypse : or whether he meant to describe the system of the Gnostics in general, as a system of idolatry, which in fact it was.

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## CHAP. XXXI.

### DISSERTATION ON 1 JOHN V. 7.

#### SECT. I.

##### *Previous remarks on this subject.*

THE controversy relative to 1 John v. 7. has rendered this passage so celebrated, and at the same time has rendered so much benefit to biblical criticism, by being the cause, that Greek manuscripts, ancient versions and editions, have been examined with greater accuracy, than they otherwise would have been, that the reader would hardly excuse me, if I passed over this subject in total silence. But as this controversy is so very extensive, and the limits of the present work will not permit me to go over the whole ground, and examine every thing, which has been said on both sides of the question, I shall argue chiefly from the premises, which the most learned, and likewise the most candid advocate of 1 John v. 7. has admitted, and proved. But though we agree in the premises, our conclusions are totally different.

In the year 1750, when I published the first edition of this Introduction, the opinion, that 1 John v. 7. was spurious, did not so generally prevail, as it does at present : and my defence of this opinion, though it belongs  
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only to the province of the critic, did not fail to procure me enemies, who regarded me as a heretic, in spite of the most solemn protestations, that, though I believed the passage to be spurious, I did not doubt the doctrine contained in it, which may be proved, and in a much better manner, from other passages of the New Testament. That I may not appear to conceal the publications, which have been directed either wholly, or partly, against me, I will enumerate the several defences of 1 John v. 7. which have appeared since the period above-mentioned.

The first is a thesis written for a public disputation by Dr. Semler at Halle in 1751, entitled, *Vindiciæ plurium præcipuarum lectionum codicis Græci Novi Testamenti, adversus Whistonum, atque ab eo latas leges criticas.* This tract eminently distinguishes itself from the rest by its profound learning, and great moderation. It would be superfluous to make any reply to it at present, because the learned author himself, who soon after altered his opinion, not only confuted all the arguments which had been used in favour of 1 John v. 7., but wrote the most important work, which we have on this subject.

The next defence of 1 John v. 7. was written by Mr. I. E. Wagner, in 1752, and entitled, *Integritas commatis septimi capitis quinti primæ Joannis epistolæ ab impugnationibus novatoris cujusdam denuo vindicata.* This treatise was directed particularly against me, whom the author meant by his 'novator quidam.' But with such an adversary as Mr. Wagner I never could persuade myself to enter into any controversy.

After a lapse of above thirty years, the learned Knittel undertook another defence of the disputed passage in his 'New Criticisms on 1 John v. 7.' printed at Brunswick, in 1785. This is a valuable work, and much useful information may be derived from it: but in the proof of the principal point the author has totally failed<sup>c</sup>.

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<sup>c</sup> See my review of this work in the *Neue Orientalische Bibliothek*, No. 32.

In the same year Mr. Travis published in London his ‘Letters to Gibbon:’ and in the year following Mr. Stresow printed at Hamburgh his ‘Open avowal of the doctrine of the Trinity as delivered in 1 John v. 7.’ But both of these publications<sup>d</sup> betrayed the utmost partiality and ignorance.

I must now mention what has been written during the same interval on the other side of the question, especially since so many new authorities have been produced against the disputed passage, that its spuriousness is still more strongly confirmed, than it was fifty years ago.

In the first place must be mentioned Wetstein’s Note to 1 John v. 7. which contains a very copious dissertation on this passage. In particular, he has quoted a much greater number of Greek manuscripts than any former critic: and he was the first who produced the evidence of the Philoxenian Syriac version, from which it appeared that the passage was no more contained in this version, than in the old Syriac. Soon after the publication of Wetstein’s Greek Testament, several Letters appeared on this subject in the *Journal Britannique*<sup>e</sup>, which discovered great learning and penetration, but were written, for the most part, in rather too ludicrous a tone for serious criticism. In these letters were particularly exposed, the ridiculous and false pretence of Amelote, that the disputed passage was contained in a Vatican manuscript, and the absurd inference which some persons had deduced from Wetstein’s correction of an erratum relative to the three Lectionaries belonging to Cesar de Missy, this correction having been converted into an acknowledgement, that the passage was contained in one of these three Lectionaries. The latest publication on this side of the question is that of Dr. Semler, entitled, *Historical and critical collections, relative to* what

<sup>d</sup> Whoever wishes for further information about them may consult what I have said in the *Orientalische Bibliothek*.

<sup>e</sup> Tom. VIII. p. 194. 274. T. IX. p. 44. 290. T. X. 127. T. XI. 66. T. XV. p. 148. 151.



what are called the proof passages in dogmatic theology. Vol. I. on 1 John v. 7.' In this work the learned author has represented in so clear and comprehensive a manner all that can be said on both sides, that every man, who reads it with impartiality, must perceive that the passage is no longer defensible.

At present therefore it is unnecessary to enter at large into this controversy; and consequently I shall do nothing more than attempt to convince those readers, who have either not sufficient leisure or not sufficient inclination to enter into deep critical inquiries, of the spuriousness of 1 John v. 7., by arguing from the premises, which Bengel the most learned writer in its defence has granted and proved. At the same time, I shall subjoin in notes an account of such authorities, as have been discovered since Bengel's time, in support of his positions: and shall likewise add in a separate section an additional argument against 1 John v. 7. which may be drawn from the history of the Alogi.

That the reader may clearly comprehend what is the subject of debate, which appears not to have been understood even by some of those, who have engaged in the controversy, I will here represent 1 John v. 7, 8. as the passage stands in our common printed editions, and inclose in brackets those words which are wanting in the Greek manuscripts. 'Ὅτι τρεῖς εἰσιν οἱ μαρτυροῦντες [ἐν τῷ ὕδατι, ὁ πατήρ, ὁ λόγος, καὶ τὸ ἅγιον πνεῦμα· καὶ οἱ τρεῖς ἓν εἰσι. Καὶ τρεῖς εἰσιν οἱ μαρτυροῦντες ἐν τῇ γῇ] τὸ πνεῦμα, καὶ τὸ ὕδωρ, καὶ τὸ αἷμα· καὶ οἱ τρεῖς εἰς τὸ ἓν εἰσι. The words which are inclosed between brackets I maintain are spurious, and assert that this text, as it proceeded from the pen of St. John, ran thus. 'Ὅτι τρεῖς εἰσιν οἱ μαρτυροῦντες, τὸ πνεῦμα, καὶ τὸ ὕδωρ, καὶ τὸ αἷμα· καὶ οἱ τρεῖς εἰς τὸ ἓν εἰσι.

From this representation it appears, that those arguments are wholly ungrounded, which are drawn from the connexion between the 7th and 8th verses. It has been objected namely,

1. That,

1. That, if the seventh verse be omitted, the words *ἐν τῇ γῇ* in the eighth verse have nothing, to which they can be opposed, that the antithesis, between the earthly, and the heavenly witnesses is destroyed, and consequently that the context does not permit the omission of the seventh verse. Now this argument presupposes, that the words *ἐν τῇ γῇ* are genuine, whereas they make a part of the controverted passage, and are themselves as spurious as the words *ἐν τῷ ὕδατι*.

2. That the eighth verse begins with *καὶ*, whence it is inferred, that beside the witnesses mentioned in this verse, other witnesses must have been mentioned immediately before. Now the same answer may be given to this argument as to the preceding, for *καὶ* at the beginning of ver. 8. is again a part of the controverted passage. And if it were not, the argument would be of no value, since a conjunction copulative, as well as a causal conjunction, may connect the 8th verse with the 6th, without any reference to other witnesses. This is really the case in the old Syriac version, and in the Erpenian Arabic version, which was made from the Syriac. These two versions express: ‘The spirit beareth witness, for the spirit is truth: and there are three, that bear witness, the spirit, the water, and the blood.’

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## S E C T. II.

*Five charges against 1 John v. 7. admitted by Bengel.*

**I** NOW deliver the charges against 1 John v. 7. which Bengel in his Apparatus criticus has not only admitted, but, where it was necessary, has proved. Now as Bengel was by far the most learned of those who have defended the  
the

the passage, and as he was likewise highly distinguished both for his accuracy and his scrupulous conscientiousness, we may safely take for granted, that the charges are true, which this able and honest advocate has admitted. They are as follows.

1. Not a single Greek manuscript, written before the sixteenth century<sup>f</sup>, contains the controverted passage<sup>g</sup>.

2. Though

<sup>f</sup> The Codex Montfortianus, which contains the passage, was written in England after the year 1500. As to the Codex Ravianus, which likewise contains the passage, it is a mere forgery, as the reader will find on consulting my catalogue of MSS. in the second volume of this Introduction, Ch. viii. Sect. 6. N<sup>o</sup>. 195. Further, the passage is contained in a Wolfenbüttel MS. called by Knittel in his 'New Criticisms on 1 John v. 7.' Codex Guelpherbytanus D. But it is certain that this MS. was written so late as the last century. See my catalogue of MSS. N<sup>o</sup>. 131. Lastly, there is another MS. in the same library, called by Knittel Guelpherbytanus C, (N<sup>o</sup>. 130. in my catalogue), in which the passage is found, not in the text, but in the margin, and written, not by the person who wrote the manuscript, but in a very different, and in a very modern hand. However this MS. has an unusual reading in the text: for instead of *ὅτι τρεῖς εἰσιν οἱ μαρτυροῦντες, τὸ πνεῦμα, κ.τ.λ.* it has *ὅτι οἱ τρεῖς εἰσιν οἱ μαρτυροῦντες, τὸ πνεῦμα, κ.τ.λ.* whence Knittel conjectures, but, as far I can see without the least foundation, that 1 John v. 7. was contained in the text of the more ancient manuscript, from which this was copied.

<sup>g</sup> Since the time that Bengel made this candid confession, many more Greek MSS. have been examined, but the passage has been found in none. Wettstein's list amounts to eighty-seven: to which may be added the Molsheim MS. (N<sup>o</sup>. 179. in my catalogue) collated by Father Goldhagen. It is true that Goldhagen does not say in express terms, that this MS. omits 1 John v. 7.: but as his particular object was to confirm the readings of the vulgate, his silence at this place in regard to the Molsheim MS. is a tacit acknowledgement. Further, the famous manuscript-thief Aymon was in possession of a leaf, which he had torn out of a MS. containing the first Epistle of St. John, which he shewed to Mr. Uffenbach, and which omitted 1 John v. 7. See Uffenbach's Travels, Vol. III. p. 477. It is true that in this leaf, a modern hand had written the passage in the margin: but this may be done in every MS. if the margin has only sufficient breadth. In the library belonging to the city of Bern, there is likewise a Greek MS. supposed to have been written in the ninth century, which omits the passage, as appears from the Catalogus Codd. MSS. bibliothecæ Bernensis, published by I. R. Sinner de Ballaigeres. Clark, in his Letters on Spain, relates that he did not find the passage, in the MSS. which he consulted in the Spanish libraries: and Birch in his Letter published in the Orient. Bibl. Vol. XXIII. p. 152. declares that among all the



2. Though it is contained in the common printed editions of the Greek Testament, it was not inserted on the authority of Greek manuscripts: for the editors of the Complutensian edition translated it from Latin into Greek<sup>b</sup>: and from the Complutensian, it was transferred to the other editions of the Greek Testament.

3. It is contained in no other ancient version, than the Latin. It is wanting in both Syriac versions, in the Arabic, Coptic, Ethiopic, Armenian and Russian<sup>i</sup> versions. It is true that in modern times the passage has been interpolated in the two last mentioned versions: but in the former it was not interpolated before the fourteenth, and in the latter not before the seventeenth century.

4. Not all the manuscripts even of the Latin version contain it<sup>k</sup>. In some it is totally omitted: in others it is found only in the margin, and of those, which have it in the text, some place it before, others after, the earthly witnesses.

5. The ancient Greek fathers have never quoted the passage, not even in those places, where we should the most expect it.

Consequently we must either admit that the passage in question is spurious, or we must allow, unless we choose

Greek MSS. which he had seen, the passage was contained in none: and he mentions particularly the celebrated Codex Vaticanus. Treschow collated five Vienna MSS. (Lambec. 1. 34, 35, 36, 37.) all of which likewise omitted the passage: but in one of them, the Lambec, 35. a modern hand has added in the margin the two Latin words, *alibi aliter*. See Treschow's *Tentamen*, p. 35. Lastly, Matthäi has examined the Greek manuscripts preserved in the Moscow libraries: but discovered the passage in none.

<sup>b</sup> Since Bengel's time this has been more fully confirmed by Semler in his 'More accurate inquiry into the state of the Greek text of the Complutensian New Testament.'

<sup>i</sup> See the second volume of this Introduction, Ch. vii. Sect. 37.

<sup>k</sup> Since Bengel's time, Blanchini and Wettstein have augmented the list of Latin MSS. which omit 1 John v. 7.: and since their time it has been augmented by the addition of several more, to which I will add a MS. (described in Uffenbach's *Travels*, Vol. III. p. 476.) which formerly belonged to Aymon.



choose to be inconsistent with ourselves, that all other readings contained in some Latin manuscripts, but rejected by all the Greek manuscripts are genuine. In fact, it is very extraordinary that any man should think of opposing the testimony of a single version in favour of a passage to the united evidence of the Greek manuscripts and all other versions against it, when the copies even of that single version are not unanimous in its favour, and the very copies, which contain it, are at variance in regard to its position.

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## S E C T. III.

*Of the authorities, which have been adduced in favour of  
I John v. 7.*

**T**HE authorities, which Bengel has produced in favour of this controverted passage, are copies of the Latin version, and certain Fathers, and Martyrs, who made use of the Latin version.

Now I readily grant that of the Latin manuscripts, which we have at present, much the greatest part contain I John v. 7. But it must be recollected, that no version has been so corrupted as the Latin, as appears from the testimony of Jerom himself. Originally there were several distinct Latin versions, which by degrees were melted into one, but in such a manner, that Jerom found no two copies alike. For the Latin transcribers took the most unwarranted liberties, they inserted in one book of the New Testament, passages which they took from another, and frequently transferred into the text what they found written in the margin of the manuscript, from which they copied. Under these circumstances, every one must immediately suspect, that a passage, which

is wanting in all the ancient Greek manuscripts, and is likewise wanting in many ancient copies even of the Latin version, is an interpolation in those Latin manuscripts, which contain it. And in the present instance, the same cause, which has procured so many zealous advocates in favour of 1 John v. 7. was the principal cause of its introduction and general reception, namely, the importance of the doctrine which it contains.

I will apply what has been said in the preceding paragraph to another instance of interpolation in the Latin version, and thence argue to the passage in question. In St. John's Gospel, ch. iii. 6. several ancient Latin MSS. added at the end of the verse, what is found in no other version, and in no Greek manuscript, '*quia Deus spiritus est.*' This text was formerly quoted by the Latin fathers, in their dispute about the Trinity, as a proof of the divinity of the Holy Ghost, and was defended with as much zeal as 1 John v. 7. has been defended in later ages. They likewise ascribed the omission of it in those copies, which did not contain it, to the malice of the Arians. In several respects then, the addition made in the Latin version at 1 John v. 7. is similar to that, which was made at John iii. 6. Moreover, the latter has been quoted by so early a writer as Tertullian, whose manuscript of the Latin version did not contain the former. Much more therefore may be said in favour of '*quia Deus Spiritus est*' added in John iii. 6. than in favour of 1 John v. 7: and the one, as well as the other, may be used as a proof text in the doctrine of the Trinity. But I much doubt whether any of our Protestant divines would venture at present to defend the authenticity of '*quia Deus spiritus est;*' and the Catholics have long since rejected it from their copies of the Vulgate. But if it be admitted that '*quia Deus spiritus est,*' John iii. 6. is spurious, how is it possible to vindicate 1 John v. 7.?

The ancient writers, which Bengel has produced in favour of 1 John v. 7. are all Latin writers, for he acknowledges, that no Greek father has ever quoted it.

Now, if no objection could be made to Bengel's witnesses, and the most ancient Latin fathers had quoted in express terms the whole of the controverted passage, their quotations would prove nothing more than, that the passage stood in their manuscripts of the Latin version, and therefore that the Latin version contained it in a very early age. But it will appear upon examination, that their evidence is very unsatisfactory.

The evidence of Tertullian, the oldest Latin writer, who has been quoted in favour of 1 John v. 7. is contained in the following passage of his treatise against Praxeas, B. I. ch. 25. *Ita connexus patris in filio, et filii in paraclete, tres efficit cohærentes, alterum ex altero, qui tres unum sunt, non unus, quomodo dictum est, 'ego et pater unum sumus.'* Hence it is inferred, that because '*tres unum sunt*' stands at present in the Latin version at 1 John v. 7. these words stood there likewise in the time of Tertullian, and that Tertullian borrowed them from the Latin version. But this inference is wholly without foundation: for Tertullian does not produce these words as a quotation, and the bare circumstance of his using the expression, '*tres unum sunt,*' will not prove that he found that expression in the Bible. On the contrary it is evident from what immediately follows, that 1 John v. 7. was *not* contained in the Latin version, when Tertullian wrote. For in proof of his assertion '*qui tres unum sunt,*' he immediately adds, *quomodo dictum est, 'ego et pater unum sumus,'* which is a quotation from St. John's Gospel, ch. x. 30. Now as this quotation relates only to the Father and the Son, and not to the Holy Ghost, surely Tertullian would not have proved the unity of the Trinity from this passage, if 1 John v. 7., which is much more to the purpose, had then been contained in any Latin manuscript, with which he was acquainted. At any rate the mere use of the words '*tres unum sunt*' affords no argument in favour of the controverted passage: and if any inference is to be deduced from their agreement with our present copies of the Latin version in 1 John v. 7. it is this, that the

person, who afterwards fabricated this passage retained an expression, which had been sanctioned by the authority of Tertullian. So much for the evidence of this Latin father, the only writer of the second century, to whom appeal has been made.

Of the Latin fathers, who lived in the third century, Cyprian alone has been produced as evidence in favour of 1 John v. 7. From the writings of Cyprian two passages have been quoted, as proofs, that 1 John v. 7. was contained in his manuscript of the Latin version. The one is from his Epistle to Jubaianus, where Cyprian writes thus. *Si baptizari quis apud hæreticum potuit, utique et remissionem peccatorum consequi potuit: si peccatorum remissionem consecutus est, et sanctificatus est, et templum Dei factus est: quæro, cujus Dei? Si creatoris, non potuit, qui in eum non credidit: si Christi, non hujus potest fieri templum, qui negat Deum Christum: si spiritus sancti, cum tres unum sint, quomodo spiritus sanctus placatus esse ei potest, qui aut patris aut filii inimicus est?* Here it must be observed that the words ‘*cum tres unum sint*,’ though inserted in the later editions of Cyprian’s works, are *not* contained in that edition, which was published by Erasmus: and even if they were genuine, they will prove nothing more, than the same words, just quoted from Tertullian. The other passage, which is much more to the purpose, is in Cyprian’s treatise *De unitate ecclesiæ*, where Cyprian writes thus. *Dicit dominus, Ego et pater unum sumus: et iterum de patre et filio, et spiritu sancto, scriptum est: et tres unum sunt.* Now admitting that the words ‘*et tres unum sunt*’ were quoted by Cyprian from 1 John v. 7. I seriously ask every impartial judge, whether a passage found in no ancient Greek manuscript, quoted by no Greek father, and contained in no other ancient version than the Latin, is therefore to be pronounced genuine, merely because one single Latin father of the three first centuries, who was bishop of Carthage, where the Latin version only was used, and where Greek was unknown, has quoted it? Under these circumstances,  
should



should we conclude, that the passage stood originally in the Greek autograph of St. John? Certainly not: for the only inference, which could be deduced from Cyprian's quotation, would be this, that the passage had been introduced into the Latin version, so early as the third century.

The preceding answer is sufficient to invalidate Cyprian's authority, in establishing the authenticity of 1 John v. 7. on the supposition, that Cyprian really quoted it. But that he did so, is more than any man can prove. The words 'tres unum sunt' are contained not only in the seventh, but likewise in the eighth verse, which is a part of the ancient and genuine text of St. John: and therefore it is at least possible, that Cyprian took them, not from the seventh, but from the eighth verse. It is true that he says, these words are written of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, whereas 'tres unum sunt' in the eighth verse relates only to the spirit, the water, and the blood. But it must be observed that the Latin fathers interpreted spiritus, aqua, et sanguis, not literally but mystically, and some of them really understood by these words, Pater, Filius, et Spiritus sanctus, taking aqua in the sense of Pater, sanguis in the sense of Filius, and spiritus in the sense of Spiritus sanctus. This is expressly asserted by Eucherius, in his *Quæstiones N. T. difficiliore*s; for after having quoted 1 John v. 8. thus, *Tria sunt, quæ testimonium perhibent, aqua, sanguis, et spiritus*, he adds soon after, *plures tamen hic ipsam interpretatione mystica intelligere Trinitatem; aqua Patrem, sanguine Christum, spiritu Spiritum sanctum manifestante*. But if Cyprian really thought that aqua, sanguis, et Spiritus 1 John v. 8. denoted Pater, Filius, et Spiritus sanctus, he might say of tres unum sunt ver. 8. that it was written 'de patre et filio, et spiritu sancto.' And that he actually did so, that he quoted not ver. 7. but understood ver. 8. mystically, appears from the following passage of Facundus<sup>1</sup>,  
who

<sup>1</sup> *Defensio trium capitulorum concilii Chalcedonensis, Lib. I. cap. 3.*

who lived in the neighbourhood of Carthage, and consequently used the same Latin version, as Cyprian. ‘Johannes Apostolus in epistolâ suâ, de Patre, et Filio, et Spiritu sancto sic dicit; Tres sunt qui testimonium dant in terra<sup>m</sup>, Spiritus, aqua, et sanguis, et hi tres unum sunt: in Spiritu significans Patrem, &c. . . . . quod Johannis Apostoli testimonium beatus Cyprianus, in epistola, sive libro, quem de Trinitate scripsit, de Patre, et Filio, et Spiritu sancto dictum intelligit.’ Facundus then quotes the words of Cyprian, which are the subject of our present inquiry. From the preceding passage, it is manifest, that 1 John v. 7. was unknown to Facundus; for he proves the doctrine of the Trinity, by a mystical interpretation of ver. 8., and appeals to the authority of Cyprian, who, he says, gave the same interpretation. But if 1 John v. 7. was unknown to Facundus, who lived in the same country as Cyprian, used the same Latin version, and wrote almost three centuries later, it is incredible that 1 John v. 7. was already introduced in the Latin manuscripts, which Cyprian used. Consequently we must conclude, that the assertion of Facundus is true, and that the words of Cyprian contain, not a quotation from 1 John v. 7. but a mystical application of 1 John v. 8. This is further confirmed by Augustin, who was likewise an African bishop, lived an hundred years later than Cyprian, and still knew nothing of 1 John v. 7.: for he has never quoted this passage, not even where he speaks of the Trinity<sup>n</sup>, but he has mystically applied the eighth verse<sup>o</sup>.

With

<sup>m</sup> ‘In terra’ is probably an addition made by later transcribers of the works of Facundus, who copied 1 John v. 8, as they found it in the Vulgate. For the controverted passage was unknown to Facundus, and therefore it is hardly credible that in his MS. of the Latin version, ver. 8. had the words ‘in terra.’

<sup>n</sup> Bengel however will not therefore allow that 1 John v. 7. was unknown to Augustin, for he says in his Apparatus Criticus, p. 465. ed. 2d. Augustinus potius dissimulanter tractavit hoc dictum, quam ignoravit: to which Semler has very properly replied, p. 388. of his Historical Collections.

<sup>o</sup> What I have here said in a short compass, the reader will find delivered at large in Semler’s Historical Collections, p. 275. 353. 382.

With respect to the testimony of Phœbadius, Marius Victorinus Afer, Vigilius Thapsensis<sup>p</sup>, and other still later Latin writers, which are produced by Bengel, as evidence for 1 John v. 7. their evidence is of no value whatsoever. For, even if no objection could be made to it, and it were absolutely certain that all these late Latin writers quoted 1 John v. 7., the only inference to be drawn would be this, that from the time of the fourth century, the passage stood in several copies of the Latin version. But will any man therefore conclude that it was not an interpolation in those copies, when Augustin, a Latin bishop of the fourth century, and Facundus another Latin bishop, who lived so late as the sixth century, were either so ignorant of it, or so persuaded of its spuriousness, that they were reduced to the necessity of proving the doctrine of the Trinity, by a mystical interpretation of the eighth verse? It is really immaterial, whether the passage was interpolated into the Latin version, in the fourth, or in a later century; for an interpolation it certainly is. In short, though the advocates of 1 John v. 7. derive their chief support from the Latin fathers, they really injure their cause by producing them.

I know not whether my readers will excuse my noticing a very frivolous objection made by Mr. Wagner, in the treatise, which I mentioned in the preceding section. He says, I have taken for granted, without proving it, that those Latin fathers, who have quoted the controverted passage, quoted it, not from the Greek original, but from the Latin version. Now I really thought it unnecessary to give any such proof, because I imagined, that every man, who had studied theology, had learnt enough of ecclesiastical history, to know the Latin fathers in general did not understand Greek, and consequently,

382. 398. To Semler's arguments, Knittel has made several learned and specious objections in his *New Criticisms*, p. 32, &c. But learned and specious as they are, they have not convinced me that Semler is mistaken.

† I omit Eucherius, for reasons, which are assigned by Semler.

frequently, that they could use only the version of their country. Jerom indeed makes an exception, for he was well acquainted with the Greek language: but Jerom is not one of those Latin fathers, who have quoted 1 John v. 7. for he has taken no notice of it in any part of his very voluminous works, as Bengel himself acknowledges<sup>a</sup>. It is true, that in the Prologue to the Catholic Epistles, which has been ascribed to Jerom, the passage is both mentioned and defended<sup>r</sup>: but this Prologue is falsely ascribed to Jerom, as Martianay has very clearly shewn<sup>s</sup>, and as Bengel, with his usual candour has admitted.

Lastly, the advocates of 1 John v. 7. lay great stress on the Confession of Faith, which was drawn up by Eugenius at the end of the fifth century, and presented by the orthodox bishops of Africa to Hunerich, King of the Vandals, who had been converted to Arianism. In this confession, which is recorded by Victor Vitenfis, in his *Historia persecutionis Vandalicæ*, is the following passage<sup>t</sup>. *Ut adhuc luce clarius unius divinitatis esse cum Patre et Filio Spiritum sanctum doceamus, Joannis Evangelistæ testimonio comprobatur. Ait namque: Tres sunt qui testimonium perhibent in cælo, Pater, Verbum, et Spiritus sanctus, et hi tres unum sunt. Numquid ait, tres in differenti æqualitate sejuncti, aut quibuslibet diversitatum gradibus longo separationis intervallo divisi? Sed tres, inquit, unum sunt.* Here 1 John v. 7. is clearly and distinctly quoted: but this proves nothing in respect to

<sup>a</sup> However, notwithstanding Jerom's total silence, Bengel is unwilling to admit Jerom's ignorance of it: for he says, § 20. Hieronymus potius dissimulanter tractavit dictum, quam ignoravit.

<sup>r</sup> The words of the Prologue relative to this passage are, *In qua etiam ab infidelibus translatoribus multum erratum esse, fidei veritate comperimus: trium tantum vocabula, hoc est, aquæ, sanguinis, et Spiritus, in sua editione ponentes, et Patris, Verbique, ac Spiritus testimonium omittentes: quo maxime fides Catholica roboratur, et Patris, et Filii, ac Spiritus sancti una divinitatis substantia comprobatur.*

<sup>s</sup> In his edition of Jerom's Works, Vol. I. p. 1670—1675.

<sup>t</sup> See p. 29. of Ruinart's edition.



to its authenticity, for the only inference which we can deduce is, that the passage was contained in the Latin manuscripts, then used in Africa. We may infer that Eugenius, who drew up the confession, found the passage in his Latin manuscript; but that all the bishops, who signed this confession, found the quoted passage likewise in their manuscripts, is a very unwarrantable inference. For, when a formulary of religious articles is composed, however numerous the persons may be, who set their names to it, it is in fact the work only of him, who drew it up: and a subscription to such a formulary, though it conveys a general assent to the doctrines contained in it, by no means implies, that every subscriber has, previous to his subscription, examined every argument adduced, or every quotation, that is alleged in it, and obtained a thorough conviction, that not one of them is exceptionable. I believe no man would venture to affirm this of all those, who subscribe to the Symbolic Books of the Lutheran church: and yet our Symbolic Books were certainly drawn up with full as much care and accuracy, as the Confession of Faith, which the orthodox bishops of Africa presented to Hunerich.

But, it is said, the Arians themselves, who were present, when this Confession was delivered, made no objection to the quotation, ‘*Tres sunt qui testimonium perhibent in cælo, &c.*’ that they acknowledged therefore by their very silence, that the passage was not spurious. Now this is a very weak and even absurd argument. For, in the first place, we have no further knowledge of this transaction, than what the orthodox themselves have given of it: and therefore it is not fair, to conclude, that the Arians made no objections, merely from the circumstance, that no objections are on record. Secondly, if the conclusion were admissible, nay, were it absolutely certain, that the Arians, who were present at this conference, admitted, ‘*Tres sunt qui testimonium perhibent in cælo, &c.*’ it would follow only, that the passage was in their Latin manuscripts,

scripts, as the quotation of it shews, that it was in the Latin manuscript of Eugenius, who drew up the Confession. For these Arians were Vandals, who had been driven out of Spain into Africa, who read the Bible only in the Latin translation, and were totally unacquainted with Greek. Consequently their silence on the quotation of a passage from the Latin translation, at the end of the fifth century, affords no presumption whatsoever, that the passage existed in the Greek original. Lastly, the whole transaction between Hunerich with his Arian Vandals, on the one side, and the orthodox bishops of Africa on the other, was of such a nature, as was very ill adapted to the decision of a critical question. For these Vandals did not combat by argument, but by force: and they brought their adversaries to silence, not by reasoning with them, but by cutting out their tongues. To argue therefore from the silence of such men to the authenticity of 1 John v. 7. is nearly the same, as an appeal in its favour to the testimony of a Russian corporal.

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#### S E C T. IV.

*The Alogi did not reject the first Epistle of St. John: consequently in their time, that is, in the second century, the Epistle did not contain the controverted passage.*

**I**N the second century there arose a sect, to which Epiphanius has given the title of Alogi<sup>u</sup>, because they would not admit the application of the term Λογος to

<sup>u</sup> That the Alogi appeared so early as the second century is certain. For Theodotus, whom Epiphanius (Hæres. 54. al. 34.) describes as, αποσπασμα εκ της Αλογης αίρεσεως, lived in the time of the emperor Severus. See Eusebii Hist. Eccles. Lib. V. cap. 28. p. 252, 253. ed. Reading,

to Christ. The reason, which they assigned, was, that Cerinthus had applied the term in this manner: whence they argued, that it could not have been thus used by an Apostle. Accordingly, they rejected both St. John's Gospel, and the Apocalypse: and they not only denied, that St. John was the author of these two books, but even ascribed them to Cerinthus. It is evident therefore, that men of this description must have rejected likewise the first Epistle of St. John, if in their time it had contained the controverted passage: for there the term *Λογος* is undoubtedly applied to the second person of the Trinity. If then it can be shewn, that the Alogi made no objection to this Epistle, we must conclude, that ch. v. 7. was not contained in the Greek manuscripts, which existed in the second century: for had it been contained in any copies, however few, so remarkable a passage could not have remained unknown to them.

The oldest writer, who has given any account of these persons, is Philastrius, who expressly declares, that they rejected St. John's Gospel, and the Apocalypse; but he says nothing of their rejection of any of his Epistles<sup>f</sup>. The next writer, who has mentioned this sect, is Epiphanius, who collected, with the utmost zeal, all historical information, which he could obtain, against the heretics, and has frequently charged them with more than his information warranted. But in the present instance, though he has asserted that the Alogi rejected the Gospel of St. John and the Apocalypse, and sometimes speaks in indefinite terms of their rejecting St. John's writings, yet when he mentions St. John's Epistles in particular, he does not say, that the Alogi rejected these likewise; he hints only a private suspicion, that

<sup>f</sup> Philastrii Hæres. LX. or (according to some editions), Hæresis, quæ sub Apostolis extitit XIII. The superscription is, Hæresis, Evangelium Johannis, et Apocalypsin ipsius rejiciens: and the first words of the text are, Post hos sunt hæretici, qui Evangelium secundum Joannem, et Apocalypsin ipsius non recipiunt.

that they *perhaps* did so. I will quote the words of Epiphanius, Hæres. LI. § 3. that the reader may judge for himself. Εἰχον τὴν αἵρεσιν καλεσμένην, ἀποβαλλεσθαι Ἰωάννην τὰς βιβλίας. Ἐπει ἐν τὸν λόγον οὐ δεχόνται τὸν παρὰ Ἰωάννην κεκηρυγμένον, Ἀλογοὶ κληθήσονται ἀλλοτρίοι τοίνυν πάντα πασὶν ὑπάρχοντες τὰ κηρυγματος τῆς ἀληθείας, ἀρνούνται τὸ καθαρὸν κηρυγματος, καὶ ὅτε τὸ τῆς Ἰωάννης Ευαγγέλιον δεχόνται, ὅτε τὴν αὐτὴ Ἀποκαλύψιν. Καὶ εἰ μὲν ἐδεχόντο τὸ Ευαγγέλιον, τὴν δὲ Ἀποκαλύψιν ἀπεβάλλοντο, ἐλεγόμεν αὐν, μὴ πῶ ἀρα κατὰ ἀκριβολογίαν τὰτο ποιοῦνται, ἀποκρυφὸν μὴ δεχομένοι διὰ τὰ ἐν τῇ Ἀποκαλύψει βαθεύς καὶ σκοτεινὸς εἰρημένα. Ὁ ὅτε οὐ δεχόνται φύσει τὰ βιβλία τὰ ἀπὸ τῶν ἁγίων Ἰωάννην κεκηρυγμένα, πάντῃ τῷ δήλῳ εἶπῃ, ὅτι ἔτσι εἰσι, καὶ οἱ ὅμοιοι τῆτοις, περὶ ὧν εἶπεν ὁ ἅγιος Ἰωάννης ἐν ταῖς καθολικαῖς ἐπιστολαῖς, ὅτι ἐσχάτῃ ὥρᾳ ἐσι, καὶ ἤκουσατε ὅτι ἀντιχριστὸς ἐρχεται, καὶ νῦν ἰδὲ ἀντιχριστοὶ πολλοὶ, καὶ τὰ ἐξῆς. Here Epiphanius twice speaks in indefinite terms of the writings of St. John, as if the Alogi rejected them all: yet, when he specifies those, which they rejected, he names only the Gospel, and the Apocalypse, as he does also, Hæres. LIV. § 1. where he says, that the Alogi rejected τὸ κατὰ Ἰωάννην Ευαγγέλιον, καὶ τὸν ἐν αὐτῷ ἐν ἀρχῇ οὖν Θεὸν λόγον, καὶ τὴν αὐτὴ Ἀποκαλύψιν, but says nothing of the Epistles. And the following passage, Hæres. LI. § 34. puts the matter out of doubt; where likewise speaking of the Alogi he says, Ἐπαίρονται δὲ πάλιν τῇ διανοίᾳ οἱ αὐτοὶ λέξι-σθῆντες ἀπειρως, ἵνα δοξῶσι παρεκβαλλεῖν τὰ τῶν ἁγίων Ἀποστολῶν βιβλία, φημι δὲ Ἰωάννης τότε Ευαγγέλιον, καὶ τὴν Ἀποκαλύψιν· ταχὺ δὲ καὶ τὰς Ἐπιστολάς, συναρᾶσι γὰρ καὶ αὐταὶ τῷ Ευαγγελίῳ, καὶ τῇ Ἀποκαλύψει. Hence it appears,

1. That Epiphanius, by his own confession, means only the Gospel, and the Apocalypse, when he says, that the Alogi rejected the writings of St. John.

2. That he is inclined indeed to excite a suspicion, that they rejected perhaps the Epistles also; but that he is not able to bring any evidence in support of this suspicion, or any confession from the Alogi themselves.

Further, Epiphanius, who writes as a man well acquainted with the works of the Alogi, delivers, at full length,



length, their objections to the writings of St. John : but among all these objections, there is not one, which is directed against St. John's Epistles, for they relate entirely to the Gospel and the Apocalypse.

Lastly, the other ecclesiastical writers, who speak of the Alogi, namely, Augustin<sup>s</sup>, John of Damascus<sup>h</sup>, and the anonymous author of the work called, Prædestinatus, five prædestinatorum hæresis<sup>i</sup>, agree in the assertion, that they rejected St. John's Gospel, and the Apocalypse : but not one of them has asserted, that the Alogi rejected his first Epistle.

The premises therefore, laid down in the title of this section, being thus established, the inference follows of course.

## S E C T. V.

*Of the reasons alleged for retaining 1 John v. 7. though the evidence of manuscripts, fathers, and versions is decidedly against it.*

ONE should suppose, that no critic, especially if a protestant, would hesitate a moment to condemn as spurious, a passage, which is contained in no ancient Greek manuscript, is quoted by no Greek father, was unknown to the Alogi in the second century, is wanting

ε Hæres. XXX.

<sup>h</sup> Joannis Damasceni Opp. Hæres. LI. p. 88. οἱ το Εὐαγγέλιον το κατὰ Ἰωάννην ἀθετοῦντες, καὶ τὴν Ἀποκαλύψιν αὐτοῦ, διὰ το τὸν ἐλθόντα ἐκ το πατρὸς θεοῦ λόγον, οὐτὰ αἰεὶ, μὴ δεχέσθαι.

<sup>i</sup> Bibliotheca Patrum maxima, Tom. XXVII. p. 549. Tricesima hæresis Alogorum sic vocata, quia Verbum Dei esse filium, accipere nolunt, in tantum, ut Evangelium S. Joannis ipsius non esse; nec Apocalypsin accipiunt ejusdem Joannis.

ing in both Syriac versions, in both Arabic versions, in the Coptic, Armenian, Ethiopic, and Slavonian versions, is contained only in the Latin, and is wanting in many manuscripts even of this version, was quoted by none of the Latin fathers of the four first centuries, and to some of them, who lived so late as the sixth century, was either wholly unknown, or was not received by them as genuine. To this immense weight of evidence against 1 John v. 7. its advocates oppose the following reasons for retaining it.

In the first place there is something divine, *Θεῖον quoddam*, as Bengel<sup>k</sup> expresses it, both in the passage itself, and the preservation of it. But in what this *Θεῖον quoddam* consists, I really do not know: for Bengel did not mean the divine doctrine, which the passage contains, since he was really too good a critic to conclude, that a text was genuine, for no other reason, than because its contents were orthodox. Nor can this *Θεῖον quoddam* be sought in the preservation of the passage: for if a genuine passage of the New Testament has been lost in the Greek, in the Syriac, in the Arabic, and in short in every other than the Latin Bible, it cannot be said, that divine Providence has particularly watched for its preservation. If this *Θεῖον quoddam* consists in a certain internal sensation, excited by the reading of the passage, this sensation, if felt only by those, who already receive the passage as genuine, cannot be used as an argument, when the question is in agitation, whether it be genuine<sup>l</sup>, or not. In other instances, Bengel would not have appealed to such a criterion: and indeed if he had, his whole *Apparatus Criticus* would have been superfluous.

Further, the following reasons are assigned, which might have occasioned the omission of 1 John v. 7.

1. That

<sup>k</sup> Sect. 28.

<sup>l</sup> Bengel himself says only, ‘*apud eos saltem, qui dictum accipiunt.*’

1. That the seventh verse begins and ends in the same manner as the eighth: and therefore that transcribers might have easily overlooked the seventh verse, and consequently have omitted it by mere accident.

2. That the Arians might have designedly expunged it, as being inimical to their doctrine<sup>m</sup>.

3. That the orthodox themselves might have designedly withdrawn it, *ex studio arcani*, as Bengel<sup>n</sup> says, that is, out of regard to the mystery of the Trinity, and under the persuasion, that such a passage as 1 John v. 7. ought not to be exposed to every reader.

Without examining the strength or weakness of these reasons, I will only observe, that such causes, though they might have produced the omission of the passage in some copies, could not possibly have occasioned it, in all the ancient Greek manuscripts, and in all the ancient versions, except the Latin. Besides, they are wholly foreign to the present purpose: they do not tend to shew the authenticity of 1 John v. 7. but account merely for its omission, on the previous supposition, that it is authentic. But this is the thing to be proved. And it is surely absurd, to account for the omission of a passage in St. John's first Epistle, before it has been shewn, that the Epistle ever contained it. Suppose I were to cite a man before a court of justice, and demand from him a sum of money, that on being asked by the magistrate, whether I had any bond to produce, in support of the demand, I answered, that I had indeed no bond to produce, but that a bond might have been very easily lost during the troubles of the late war. In this case, if the magistrate should admit the validity of the demand, and oblige the accused party to pay the sum

<sup>m</sup> The Latin fathers said this of the interpolation '*quia Deus spiritus est*,' John iii. 6. but they did not say the same of 1 John v. 7. The charge of having expunged this passage has been laid to the Arians only in modern times, and by writers, who certainly would not undertake to defend the authenticity of the former.

sum required, every man would conclude, not so much that he was unjust, as that his mental faculties were deranged. But is not this case similar to the case of those, who contend, that 1 John v. 7. is genuine, because, it *might* have been lost? In fact, their situation is still worse, since the loss of a single manuscript is much more credible, than the loss of one and the same passage in more than eighty manuscripts.

Lastly, Bengel entertained hopes, that Greek manuscripts would hereafter be discovered, which contained the passage. Now, till such manuscripts are actually produced, the hope of discovering them will not supply their place. And if we may judge from experience, all hope of discovering any such manuscripts is now at an end: for since Bengel's time, a great number of Greek manuscripts, with which he was unacquainted, have been examined, but none of them contain the controverted passage.

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## S E C T. VI.

*In what manner 1 John v. 7. was first introduced into the Latin version, and afterwards into our printed editions of the Greek Testament.*

WHEN it has been proved by satisfactory evidence, that a passage is spurious, it is wholly unnecessary to shew at what time, or in what manner, the passage was first introduced. There are many readings in our common printed text, which at present are universally allowed to be false, though we cannot ascertain by what copyist they were first written, or what particular cause has given them birth. In such cases we must be satisfied with probable conjecture; for historical evidence is seldom



seldom to be expected, since interpolations are in general clandestine facts, and are very rarely recorded. But since the advocates of 1 John v. 7. contend, that this passage would not have been contained in the Latin version, unless it had been contained likewise in the Greek, I will endeavour to shew in what manner it was first introduced into the Latin version.

The simple fact, that it had it's origin in the Latin, is indisputable, since it is contained in no ancient Greek manuscript, and in no other version\*. And the cause, which gave it birth, was probably the following. It appears from the third section of this chapter, that the African fathers interpreted 1 John v. 8. mystically, and considered 'the spirit, the water, and the blood,' as denoting the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Further it must be remarked, that the African fathers, were the first, who discovered 1 John v. 7. in the Latin version. The combination of these two facts leads to the following probable conclusion: that the spiritual interpretation of 1 John v. 8. was written in the margin of one or more Latin manuscripts<sup>p</sup>, and that, in order to distinguish the terrestrial from the celestial meaning, the words 'in terra' were added as a marginal gloss, in reference to 'testimonium dant' in the eighth verse, by which means both the literal and the spiritual meaning were rendered perfect. According to this representation, the text and the margin stood thus.

\* in terra.

Et tres sunt, qui testimonium dant in celo, Pater, Verbum, et Spiritus Sanctus: et hi tres unum sunt.

Quoniam tres sunt, qui testimonium dant\*, spiritus, et aqua, et sanguis: et hi tres unum sunt.

When

• There is no version, in which so many, and so long interpolations have been made, as in the Latin.

<sup>p</sup> Marginal glosses were very common in the Latin manuscripts.

When a copy of this kind fell into the hands of ignorant transcribers, who were making new transcripts of the Latin Bible, they imagined, that what was written in the margin was a part of the text, which had been omitted by mistake; consequently they inserted it in the text of the manuscript, which they themselves were writing. But some of them inserted the marginal reading before the text, of which it was the interpretation, others after it: and this is the reason why the controverted passage has no fixed place in the Latin manuscripts, the heavenly witnesses sometimes preceding, sometimes following the earthly witnesses <sup>a</sup>.

In this manner the passage having gained admittance into one or more Latin manuscripts written in Africa, it had the undeserved good fortune to be quoted in the Confession of Faith, presented at the end of the fifth century by the African bishops to Hunerich, king of the Vandals<sup>b</sup>. And as these bishops became martyrs, and were said even to have performed a miracle<sup>c</sup>, the passage in consequence of its having been quoted in their Confession, not only acquired celebrity, but was stamped with authority. Hence other Latin transcribers, especially they, who lived in Africa, were induced to follow the example of those, who transferred the passage from the margin to the text. And, as the Carthaginian and Roman churches were closely allied, this example soon spread itself to the transcribers, who lived in Italy. It must be observed however, that the example was not imitated universally: for Facundus, who lived in the sixth century, did not find the passage in his manuscript of the Latin version. This appears  
from

<sup>a</sup> In the modern transcripts of the Vulgate, the former arrangement generally prevails: but Bengel preferred the latter.

<sup>b</sup> That this quotation is no argument for the authenticity of the passage, has been shewn in the third section of this chapter.

<sup>c</sup> It was asserted, that they spake after their tongues were cut out.

from the circumstance, that he proves the doctrine of the Trinity by a mystical interpretation of the eighth verse: which he certainly would not have done, if the seventh verse had been contained in his manuscript, because in this verse the doctrine, which he intended to prove, is literally and directly asserted. After the sixth century, the whole Latin church was involved in ignorance and barbarism; all critical inquiries were at an end: and both spurious and genuine passages were received without distinction. In the middle ages therefore, 1 John v. 7. was generally considered throughout the west of Europe, as a part of St. John's first Epistle, without any further questions being asked about it.

At the revival of letters, and the restoration of Greek literature, it was discovered, that, though the passage had gained admittance into the Vulgate, it was not contained in the Greek manuscripts. Accordingly, Erasmus printed his two first editions of the Greek Testament without it: that is, he printed the text of St. John's first Epistle as he found it in Greek manuscripts. This gave great offence to the members of the church of Rome, whose oracle was the Vulgate: and who concluded, from the omission of the passage in the Greek manuscripts, not that it was spurious, but that the Greeks had maliciously erased it. Erasmus however did not think proper to translate the passage from Latin into Greek, and to insert it without authority: but he promised to insert it in his next edition, if a Greek manuscript could be discovered, which contained it. Before the publication of his third edition he received intelligence, that such a manuscript existed in England, and likewise a transcript from this manuscript of the place in question. From this transcript Erasmus inserted the controverted passage in his third and following editions, *'ne cui sit causa calumniandi.'* From those editions others were copied, and others again from these, till at length 1 John v. 7. became as general in

the printed edition of the Greek Testament, as it was in the Latin version<sup>1</sup>.

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## SECT. VII.

*Luther did not admit i John v. 7. into his German translation of the Bible.*

**N**EITHER the truth of the doctrine, which this controverted passage contains, nor the clamours of the Catholics against those, who rejected the passage, could induce Luther to insert a translation of it in his German Bible. He must therefore have believed, that the Complutensian editors did not derive it from ancient Greek manuscripts; and that the Codex Britannicus, from which it came into the third edition of Erasmus, was a manuscript of no authority. This suspicion has been fully confirmed by later inquiries: and at present it is well known, that the Codex Britannicus, which is no other than the Codex Montfortianus, is a very modern manuscript. Luther's critical learning was not equal to that of Erasmus: but in strength of understanding no man ever surpassed him, and in resolution and integrity he was superior to all the learned of his age. In the present instance at least he ventured further, than any other translator, who lived at that time in the west of Europe, would have done: and not only did not translate it in his first edition of the German

<sup>1</sup> It has been likewise interpolated in the editions of the Greek Testament, which are used by the Greeks of the present age. In the last century, it was interpolated in the Slavonian, or Russian version: and in the Armenian version, it was interpolated so early as the end of the thirteenth century, in the time of king Haitho, who was strongly attached to the church of Rome.



German Bible, but refused to admit it, as long as he lived, in any of the subsequent editions<sup>u</sup>.

The last edition, which was printed, while Luther was living, and indeed was not quite finished till after his death, was that of 1546. In the preface to this edition, which comes immediately after the title page, he delivers the following request. ‘Dr. Martin Luther. I request my friends, and my foes, my masters, printers, and readers, to let this New Testament continue mine. If they find faults in it, let them make another. I know well what I make, I see also well, what others make. But this Testament shall remain Luther’s German Testament. Now a days there is neither measure nor end of mending and bettering. Let every man therefore take heed of false copies, for I know how unfaithfully and untruly others have reprinted what I have printed.’ Now one should suppose, that every author has a right to expect, that a request, like this, would be granted: and that, since he never admitted 1 John v. 7. into any edition of his German translation, no future editor would presume to insert it, and still retain the name of ‘Luther’s translation’ on the title. But Luther had not been dead thirty years, when the passage was interpolated in his German translation.

The first edition<sup>w</sup>, in which this act of injustice took place, and in which Luther’s text at least was corrupted, is that, which was printed at Francfort in 1574. But in the edition of 1583, printed in the same place, and also in several still later Francfort editions, the passage was again omitted. The oldest Wittenberg edition, which received it, was that of 1596: and in the Wittenberg edition of 1599 it is likewise contained, but is printed in Roman characters. In 1596 it was inserted also in the Low German Bible, printed in that year at Hamburg.

<sup>u</sup> See the *Memoirs of a Library in Halle*, Vol. III. p. 16. N. 202.

<sup>w</sup> See the ‘*Catalogue of Bibles in the possession of the Dowager Duchess of Brunswick.*’

Hamburg. In the seventeenth century, if we except the Wittenberg edition of 1607, which remained true to Luther's text, the insertion was general : and of the editions, which have been printed in the present century, I know of none, which does not contain it. Later editors however are much more excusable, than the first corrupters of Luther's text. For not every one knows at present, that the passage was never admitted into any of Luther's own editions : and they, who do know it, would not be permitted perhaps in every university, to print Luther's translation, which is the established version of our country, without the passage.

Knittel<sup>x</sup> has endeavoured to shew, that Luther altered his opinion, and in the latter part of his life allowed, that the passage was genuine : whence Knittel infers, that Luther must have seen the passage in a Greek manuscript. But I cannot admit the premises, and still less the conclusion<sup>y</sup>. It is true, that Luther rejected in positive terms 1 John v. 7. in a public lecture delivered in 1522 because (to use his own words) ' it was not contained in the Greek Bibles : ' but that in a lecture delivered many years afterwards, at least after the year 1532, he did not repeat this assertion, on the contrary, that he read 1 John v. 7. from the Greek Testament, and even explained it. But this argument proves nothing. For the assertion, which Luther had made in 1522, that the passage was not contained in the Greek Bibles, though true at that time, was not true ten years afterwards, and consequently Luther could not repeat it after the year 1532. Namely, the editions of the Greek Testament published before 1522 did not contain the passage : but in almost all the editions published after that year, it was inserted. As to the circumstance, that Luther in his latter lecture, explained 1 John v. 7. after he had read it from the  
Greek

<sup>x</sup> New Criticisms on 1 John v. 7. p. 131—138.

<sup>y</sup> See the Neue Orient. Bibl. Vol. II. p. 132—137. where I have reviewed Knittel's work.

Greek Testament, without entering into any critical inquiry in respect to its authenticity, it shews nothing more, than that Luther distinguished exegetical from critical lectures, and that in explaining the Greek Testament, he interpreted what he and his hearers had before them. That he then received it as genuine, is an inference, which we are not warranted to make: and indeed it would be inconsistent with his unremitting resolution to reject it from his German translation, and with his last request, in the preface to that very edition, during the printing of which, he died.

Before I conclude this section, I must make the following remarks.

1. Whether it be granted, that 1 John v. 7. is spurious, or whether it be not, it is no part of Luther's version, and they, who have inserted it have been guilty of an act of injustice to the author.

2. It is not only unjust, but injudicious, to insert 1 John v. 7. in Luther's catechism. For children are thus accustomed to consider this passage as the chief proof of the doctrine of the Trinity: the consequence of which is, that, when they are grown up, and have been informed, that the passage is spurious, they naturally conclude, that the doctrine itself is ungrounded.

3. It is uncandid in the extreme, when one protestant condemns another for rejecting 1 John v. 7. since it was rejected by the author of our reformation. Nor can it be said, that Luther, were he now alive, would be of a different opinion, since every inquiry, which has been instituted since the age of Luther, has brought to light fresh evidence, not in favour of the passage, but against it.

## C H A P. XXXII.

## OF THE TWO LAST EPISTLES OF ST. JOHN.

## S E C T. I.

*Of the canonical authority of these two Epistles.*

**I**N the fourth century, when Eusebius wrote his Ecclesiastical History, the second and third Epistles of St. John were not reckoned among the *ὁμολογούμενα*, but were in the number of the *αντιλεγόμενα*, or books received by some, and rejected by others. Nor have they been admitted into the ancient Syriac version, which is the established version of the Syrian churches. Yet they are so similar to the first Epistle, both in the thoughts, and in the style, that in my opinion, they were certainly written by the same person, who wrote the first, that is, by St. John the Apostle. Nor is it easy to comprehend what could have induced an impostor to forge two such Epistles, or what advantage he could have proposed by the introduction of them. For they contain nothing, which had not been already said in the first Epistle, except commendation or censure either of unnamed persons, or of Demetrius and Diotrephes, of whom no one knows what they were. They could not have been forged during St. John's life, for the imposture must have been immediately detected: and, if they had been forged after his death, it is not very probable that the impostor would have made the pretended author promise at the end of each Epistle, that he would shortly pay a visit to those, to whom the Epistles were addressed.

The reason, why these two Epistles were not universally admitted, in the early ages of Christianity, into the collection of writings called the New Testament, has not  
 ✠ been



been hitherto ascertained. It may be asked, whether they were written after the canon was already formed : or whether it was thought unnecessary to retain two Epistles, which were of a confined and personal nature : or whether the address, with which each of them begins, occasioned the supposition that they were not written by St. John the Apostle.

The last mentioned cause appears to me the most probable. The author neither calls himself John, nor assumes the title of an Apostle : but names himself simply ‘the elder,’ (ὁ πρεσβύτερος). Now St. John might with the same propriety call himself πρεσβύτερος, as St. Peter has called himself συμπρεσβύτερος<sup>2</sup> ; and after the death of St. Peter, the title ὁ πρεσβύτερος might have been applied exclusively to St. John, who was the only Apostle then living, consequently the oldest Christian, and therefore, literally the elder and father of the whole church. But since the seniors of each Christian community were likewise called πρεσβύτεροι, it was imagined that the author of these two Epistles was not an Apostle, but a senior or presbyter of some Christian community. And, as there lived at Ephesus, at the same time with St. John the Apostle, another John, who had the office of senior or presbyter in the Ephesian church, it was supposed that this John, and not the Apostle, was the author of these two Epistles. But whoever ascribed them to John the Presbyter could not receive them as a part of the sacred canon.

In modern times, an objection has been made to the opinion, that St. John the Apostle was the author, drawn from a comparison of St. John’s amiable character with an apparently severe precept delivered in the second Epistle, ver. 10, 11. Here the author says, ‘If there come any unto you and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither greet him : for he that greeteth him is partaker of his evil deeds.’ Now it is asserted that St. John the Apostle, whose writings are replete with precepts of love and charity, would hardly have given the uncharitable command to refuse the rites of hospitality

<sup>2</sup> 1 Pet. v. 1.

pitality to all those, who differed from us in religious opinions: and that this command in particular would have come with great impropriety from St. John, since no man more sensibly felt the violation of these rites than himself<sup>a</sup>. Hence it is inferred that he was not the author, at least of the second Epistle.

If the passage just quoted be detached from the rest of the Epistle, and the doctrine, which it contains, be taken in its utmost latitude, I own that the argument is very specious. However it may be explained in such a manner, as to remove all difficulty. The Greek expression *χαίρειν αὐτῷ* used in the original, does not denote an ordinary salutation, such as we make to indifferent persons, when we meet them in the street, but involves in it a kind of blessing, like the expression, ‘Peace be with thee<sup>b</sup>.’ And it is evident from the context, that the subject here relates to the blessing usually received, on entering the house of a friend, or an assurance of hearty welcome. For that which is meant by the words *λαμβάνειν αὐτὸν εἰς οἰκίαν, καὶ χαίρειν αὐτῷ* ver. 10. is comprised in the single phrase *χαίρειν αὐτῷ* in the 11th verse. Now it must be observed, that among the primitive Christians, it was the custom to receive all travelling brethren, and to entertain them during their stay, which was sometime done at the expence of the whole community by persons appointed for that purpose. That the third Epistle relates to the reception and entertainment of travelling Christians, especially of those who travelled to preach the Gospel, is evident from ver. 5—11. But the second Epistle is so similar to the third, that we may conclude the same of that also, in the passage, which is the subject of our present inquiry. Suppose then that a travelling Christian was known to deliver  
false

<sup>a</sup> See Luke ix. 52—54.

<sup>b</sup> The Arabic salutation *سلام عليك* which signifies Peace be with you, is used between Mohammedans, but not between Mohammedans and Christians.

false doctrines, or to propagate Gnostic errors, such as this, that Jesus was not the son of God, the question is, Was he entitled to the hospitable reception usually given to Christian travellers, and was it want of charity to refuse him admittance, unless his situation were such, as rendered him an object of compassion? I think not: for if a missionary comes into my house, who is a false teacher of Christianity, and I receive and protect him, I take part in the propagation of his errors.

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## S E C T. II.

*Of the time, when the second and third Epistles of St. John were written.*

THESE two Epistles are so similar, both in their contents and in their expressions, that they appear to have been written at the same time, and delivered to the care of the same persons, who were probably certain Christians, engaged in the propagation of Christianity, and then going to take a journey for that purpose into the country, where the persons resided, to whom St. John wrote. This opinion derives additional probability from the close of each Epistle, in which St. John promises an early visit, and declares that he has much more to communicate, than that which he has committed to writing.

This promise, if the second Epistle was written, not to an individual but to a whole church, might induce one to suppose, that Caius, to whom the third Epistle is addressed, was a member of that church. But a careful comparison of the two Epistles will shew, that this supposition is ungrounded. For St. John's principal object in the third Epistle is to recommend certain travellers to the hospitality of Caius: and he says, ver. 9. 'I wrote unto

unto the church, but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the pre-eminence among them, receiveth us not.' Hence it appears that St. John, before he wrote to Caius, had already sent a letter of recommendation to the church of which Caius was a member, but that Diotrephes had refused to receive those, whom St. John had recommended. Now if this were the second Epistle, we should certainly find it in those recommendations, to which St. John alludes, and probably some mention of Diotrephes. But in the second Epistle no mention is made, either of Diotrephes, or of any recommendations whatsoever: consequently it cannot be the Epistle, to which St. John alludes in the third<sup>c</sup>. However I think it probable that the place, to which the second Epistle was sent, was not far distant from the place where Caius resided, and that the travelling brethren, whom St. John recommends to Caius, intended to visit both places.

That these two Epistles were written at a time, when St. John was no longer young, appears from the title *ὁ πρεσβυτερος*, which he has given himself in each of them. But this title will not warrant the conclusion that he was in a very advanced age. From the time of St. Peter's death, which happened in 66, St. John was strictly speaking, the elder or father of the church: and even before St. Peter's death, he might have called himself *πρεσβυτερος* with the same propriety, as St. Peter has called himself *συμπρεσβυτερος*<sup>d</sup>. There is no necessity therefore for assigning to these Epistles so late a date as 82 or 83, as Whitby has done, and still less, so very late a date as 91 or 92, which is assigned them by Mill. Besides, if St. John had written these Epistles, when he was upwards of eighty, he would hardly have promised, as he did in each of them, that he would soon under-  
take

<sup>c</sup> Hence it follows that St. John wrote an Epistle, which is no longer extant. But some commentators, who will not admit, that any Epistle could be lost, which was written by an Apostle, translate *ἔγραψα τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ*, 3 John 9. 'I would have written to the church.'

<sup>d</sup> 1 Pet. v. 1.



take a journey. Nor is it probable, if he had written at so very advanced an age, that his language would have been so fluent.

I once thought, that these two Epistles were written before that, which is called the first Epistle of St. John: but my reason for supposing so, appears to me at present to be ill-founded. I will mention it however, lest the same thought should occur to others.

St. John says in his first Epistle, ch. ii. 13. (at least according to our common printed text), ‘I write unto you, fathers, because ye have known him, that is, from the beginning. I write unto you, young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one. I write unto you little children, because ye have known the Father.’ Here St. John speaks in the present tense; but in the next verse he speaks in the past time, and says, ‘I have written unto you, fathers, because ye have known him, that is, from the beginning. I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one.’ Now in the second Epistle, ver. 5. there is something which bears a resemblance to that which St. John says he had written to the fathers: and ver. 4. contains the substance at least of that, which he says he had written to the young men. But, as the expressions are different, and in the second Epistle no distinction occurs between fathers and young men, as in the first Epistle, the conjecture grounded on 1 John ii. 14. rests on a very uncertain foundation.

I am therefore unable to discover any marks of the time, when the two last Epistles were written: and it remains uncertain, whether they were written before or after what is called the first Epistle, and whether they were written before, or after the destruction of Jerusalem.

## S E C T. III.

*Whether the second Epistle was sent to a particular person, or to a whole church.*

THE address, with which the second Epistle begins, is, ‘The elder to the elect lady (ἐκλεκτῇ κυρίᾳ), and her children.’ Now the title ‘elect lady’ has been explained by many ancient commentators, not literally, but figuratively, and as denoting, either the whole Christian church, or some particular Christian church. The former explanation has been given by Jerom<sup>e</sup>, the latter by Cassiodorus. But that this Epistle was addressed to the whole Christian church is utterly impossible, because St. John promises at the close of it that he will soon visit the person or persons to whom he is writing, which promise he could not intend to make to every Christian community dispersed throughout the Roman empire. The same objection does not apply to the other explanation, namely, that it was addressed to a particular Christian church: but there are other objections, which apply equally to both. ‘The elect lady, and her children,’ if understood of a Christian church and its members, is too figurative for the epistolary style, and though an expression like this would be admissible perhaps in an animated prophecy, it is very ill suited to the plain address of a letter. Besides, when the Hebrew prophets call the Jewish women by the title ‘daughters of Zion,’ every reader perceives at once that the language is metaphorical: but when a letter begins with the address, ‘to the elect lady and her children,’ the subject does not suggest a metaphor.

Most of the modern commentators explain ἐκλεκτῇ κυρίᾳ literally, and understand the expression not of a church,

<sup>e</sup> In his Epistle to Agaruchia. T. IV. p. 741. Ep. 91.

<sup>f</sup> In his Exposition of this Epistle.

church, but of a woman. But they do not agree in their literal interpretations. Some translate *εκλεκτη κυρια* ‘to the elect lady,’ while others consider either *εκλεκτη* or *κυρια* as a proper name. But *εκλεκτη* cannot here be a proper name, for, if it were, St. John would not have written *τη Εκλεκτη κυρια*, but *τη κυρια Εκλεκτη*, or at least, without the article *Εκλεκτη κυρια*. Besides, if *εκλεκτη* ver. 1. be considered as a proper name, the same word ver. 13. which is applied to this lady’s sister must likewise be explained as a proper name, and then we shall have two sisters, each of which had the unusual name of Electa. The opinion, that *Κυρια* is a proper name, is not attended with the same grammatical difficulty: and it has this circumstance in its favour, that *Κυρια* is rendered as a proper name in the Syriac and Arabic versions<sup>2</sup>.

Yet the opinion, that this Epistle was addressed to a woman, is likewise attended with some difficulties, which, though when taken singly they are not of sufficient importance to overturn it, are of some weight, at least as they appear to me, when taken together. St. John says, ver. 5. *ερωτω σε, κυρια, — ινα αγαπωμεν αλληλους*. It is true that the Apostle speaks of Christian love and charity, and that no serious man, on reading this passage, will think of any other kind of love, especially, as neither the writer of the Epistle, nor the person to whom it was written, (if written to a woman) were any longer young. But I think that, if St. John had written really to a woman, he would have avoided an expression, which they, who are accustomed to treat grave subjects ludicrously, might convert into ridicule. Further, it is extraordinary, that St. John should speak ver. 1. of ‘the elect lady, and her children,’ and ver. 13. of ‘the children of her elect sister,’ and yet say nothing of either of their husbands. However I will not insist on this objection because both of them might have been widows. Again,  
St.

<sup>2</sup> The word is retained and written in Syriac *ܩܝܪܝܐ*, in Arabic *كوريا*, and in the Arabic of Erpenius *كبريا*.

St. John not only greets the children of the elect lady, who were then with her, but speaks likewise, ver. 4. of several other of her children, whom he ‘found walking in the truth.’ This implies, that her children were very numerous. Lastly, St. John speaks of her children, as if they were all of them sons, and says nothing of daughters. For, though he uses both ver. 1. and ver. 4. the neuter τέκνα, which when used by itself may include daughters as well as sons, yet, since he adds in the former instance ἐς ἐγὼ ἀγαπῶ, and in the latter instance περιπατεῖντας ἐν ἀληθείᾳ, the masculine relative and participle restrict the sense to sons alone<sup>h</sup>. Now in a numerous family, it is very seldom that we find all sons, and no daughters: but when we speak of a church the word ‘sons’ includes persons of both sexes.

It appears then, that the literal interpretation of ἐκλεκτὴ κυρία is attended with difficulty, as well as its metaphorical interpretation. I would explain therefore this expression elliptically, by which means it may be made to denote a church, as well as by its metaphorical interpretation; and at the same time the inconvenience attending the metaphor will be avoided. I conjecture that κυρία is used elliptically for κυρία ἐκκλησία, which among the ancient Greeks signified an assembly of the people held at a stated time, and at Athens was held three times in every month<sup>i</sup>. Now since the sacred writers adopted the term ἐκκλησία from its civil use among the Greeks, κυρία ἐκκλησία, if used in the sacred writings would signify the stated assembly of the Christians held every Sunday: and τῇ ἐκλεκτῇ κυρίᾳ, with ἐκκλησία understood, would signify ‘to the elect church or community, which comes together on Sundays.’ The only difficulty attending this interpretation is, that I know of no instance, in which ἐκκλησία, as belonging to κυρία, is suppressed.

<sup>h</sup> St. John here uses, what is called *constructio ad sensum*.

<sup>i</sup> See Suidas, under the article ἐκκλησία κυρία.



## S E C T. IV.

*Of the contents and design of the third Epistle.*

**T**HE object of the third Epistle was to recommend to Caius, certain Christians, who were travelling to preach the Gospel to the heathens; and St. John wrote to Caius in particular, because his hospitality to the Christian brethren was already known, and St. John had reason to apprehend, that a former Epistle, which he had addressed to the community, of which Caius was a member, had produced little effect.

The recommendation is properly contained in the sixth, seventh, and eighth verses. In the sixth verse, St. John says to Caius, thou wilt do well (*καλως ποιησεις*<sup>k</sup>) if thou forwardest the brethren on their journey. These brethren he describes in the seventh verse, as persons, who 'went forth for God's sake, taking nothing of the Gentiles.' Now whether these persons went forth voluntarily to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles, and would not receive from them any reward for their labours, or whether they had been compelled by a persecution to quit their own country, and refused to accept alms in their distress from benevolent heathens, is a question, on which the commentators are not agreed. But the former is the most probable, because it is attended with no inconvenience, whereas to the latter may be made the three following objections.

1. In the age, in which this Epistle was written, there were very few exiles for the sake of the Gospel, especially in Grecian countries. And if any Christians had been banished from Ephesus, St. John himself, as the principal person, must likewise have been banished.

2. If

<sup>k</sup> The expression *καλως ποιησεις* denotes a civil request, and is equivalent to, 'I intreat thee' See 1 Maccab. xi. 43. xii. 18. 22. At any rate, as St. John here uses the future tense, he must mean some expected, and not any past act of hospitality,

2. If the persons, whom St. John recommended, had been exiles, he would not have requested Caius to shew them a mere temporary hospitality, and then forward them on their way. To exiles, who stand in need of pecuniary assistance, we render very little service by supplying them with the means of travelling further: for whither at last are they to travel? The greatest favour which we can bestow on such persons is to procure for them employment in the place where they are, and thus enable them to provide for themselves.

3. It appears from ver. 7. that the persons, whom St. John recommended, would accept of no present from an heathen. Now an exile in distress, who carries his religious hatred so far, as to reject the benevolent offers of those, who entertain different sentiments from himself, is entitled to no commiseration. Such a man, if he had it in his power, would be the most intolerant persecutor: and therefore every favour conferred on him is an ill bestowed act of liberality, since it confirms him in his hatred of all those who have a different religion. A man of this description must be left to himself, till poverty and hunger have brought him to his senses, and have changed the imaginary saint into a rational being.

In the 12th verse St. John highly commends Demetrius, saying, ‘Demetrius hath good report of all men, and of the truth itself: yea, and we also bear record, and ye know, that our record is true.’ Now whether this Demetrius was one of the travellers, whom the Apostle recommended, or whether he lived in the same place with Caius, is uncertain. But the former is the most probable, for in the latter case, he must have been well known to Caius, and therefore St. John would not have thought it necessary to bear witness to his good character.

In the Christian community, of which Caius was a member, there was a person, called Diotrephes, who assumed to himself very great authority. Whether he was orthodox, or an heretic, whether a bishop or a deacon, whether a Jewish or an heathen convert, it is  
wholly

wholly impossible to determine, for we know no more about him, than what is mentioned in this Epistle. It is useless therefore to form any conjecture, since we have no ground, on which either this or that supposition can be built. Equally uncertain is it, what his motive was for objecting to the reception of the Christian travellers whom St. John had recommended: whether he disapproved of their doctrine, or whether he was inimical to them, as being heathen converts, or according to the opinion of others, as being Jewish converts, or whether, as Heumann supposes, he objected to their entertainment, on account of the impoverished state of the public chest. We have no foundation for any one of these suppositions: and, if I choose to indulge conjecture, I could augment the list by as many more, for instance, that Diotrophes was afraid the Christians might incur the displeasure of the magistrates, by the reception of missionaries, or that the missionaries themselves were ill chosen, or that the heathens, to whom they preached, and not the Christians, should provide for their subsistence, or lastly, that Diotrophes himself delivered false doctrines, and therefore objected to those, who propagated the true faith. This last conjecture is the most specious, and best accords with the contents of the Epistle. Yet, as we have a total want of historical information on this subject, it is better to confess our ignorance, than to pretend to know, what we really do not.

Of this Diotrophes, St. John says *ver. ετε αυτος επιδεχεται τας αδελφας, και τας βελομενους κωλυει, και εκ της εκκλησιας εκβαλλει*. Some commentators supply *τας αδελφας* after *εκβαλλει*, and understand that Diotrophes ejected the travelling brethren from the church: but others, who I think are in the right, construe *εκβαλλει* with *τας βελομενους*, and understand that Diotrophes ejected those who wished to receive and entertain the travelling brethren. However, it does not thence follow, that he was a bishop: for bishops at that time had not the power of excommunication, which was vested in the community at large.

The acts of authority which Diotrephes exercised must be ascribed either to his rank, or his wealth, or his eloquence, or some other cause, by which he gained the majority of voices, and thus effected his purpose.

But if Diotrephes had sufficient influence in the community of which he was a member, to procure the ejection of those who received strangers, it is said, that Caius, who was remarkable for his hospitality, would hardly have been spared. Yet Caius does not appear in this Epistle, as a person who had been excommunicated. To this I answer, that, though Diotrephes might have sufficient influence to procure the ejection of several members, it does not therefore follow, that he was able to procure the ejection of every hospitable member, especially of those, who were particularly loved and respected, as Caius probably was. At any rate, I cannot agree with those commentators, who, to avoid this seeming difficulty, construe *εκβαλλει* with *αδελφους*: for the travelling brethren, who wished to be received and entertained in that community, were not yet members of it, and therefore it cannot be said, that they were expelled from it. The expression *εκβαλλει εκ της πολεως* would have suited them, but not *εκβαλλει εκ της εκκλησιας*, which is applicable only to those, who were actual members of that church.

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## S E C T. V.

*Of the person of Caius, to whom the third Epistle is addressed.*

**S**EVERAL persons of the name of Caius occur in the New Testament.

1. In the Epistle to the Romans, ch. xvi. 23. St. Paul mentions a Caius who lived at Corinth, and whom



St. Paul calls ‘ his host, and the host of the whole church.’

2. In the first Epistle to the Corinthians, ch. i. 14. St. Paul likewise mentions a Caius, who lived at Corinth, and who had been baptized by St. Paul. This is probably the same person with the preceding.

3. In the Acts of the Apostles, ch. xix. 29. is mentioned a Caius, who was a native of Macedonia, who accompanied St. Paul, and spent some time with him at Ephesus. This is probably a different person from the preceding: for the description given of the Caius, who lived in Corinth, and was the host of the whole church there, does not accord with the description given of the Macedonian Caius, who in the very same year travelled with St. Paul, and was with him at Ephesus.

4. In Acts xx. 4. we meet a Caius of Derbe, who was likewise a fellow traveller of St. Paul. This person cannot well be the Corinthian Caius, for the host of the whole church at Corinth hardly left the place to travel into Asia. And he is clearly distinguished from the Macedonia Caius by the epithet *Δερβειος*.

Now whether the Caius to whom St. John wrote his third Epistle, was one of the persons just mentioned, or whether he was different from them all, it is at present difficult to determine, because Caius was a very common name. Yet if we may judge from the similarity of character, it is not improbable that he was the Caius, who lived at Corinth, and who is called by St. Paul ‘ the host of the whole church:’ for hospitality to his Christian brethren was the leading feature in the character of that Caius, to whom St. John wrote, and on that very account he is commended by the Apostle. Further, St. John’s friend lived in a place, where the Apostle had in Diotrephes a very ambitious and tyrannical adversary: and that there were men of this description at Corinth, is evident from the two Epistles to the Corinthians, though St. Paul has not mentioned their names.

If the third Epistle of St. John was really sent to Corinth, the second Epistle must have been sent to some

place in the neighbourhood of Corinth, or even to Corinth itself, since the missionaries did not intend to preach in the community, but to travel further<sup>1</sup>.

Perhaps, the thought will suggest itself, that the brethren who were gone forth to preach the Gospel, and would accept of nothing from the Gentiles were St. Paul and his companions; for they acted in this manner at Corinth. But this is not probable, because so remarkable a brother as St. Paul would have been mentioned in this Epistle by name, if he had really been one of them. Besides, St. Paul did not accept of any present, even from the Christians at Corinth.

Lastly, St. John promises Caius at the close of the Epistle, that he will shortly come to visit him. It is true, that in the ecclesiastical annals of the first century no journey or voyage of St. John to Corinth is now on record. But we must not therefore conclude that he never was there; for we hardly know any thing of the travels of any other of the Apostles than St. Paul, and consequently can draw no conclusion from the silence of their history. We know that St. John lived during a considerable time at Ephesus: and since Corinth lay almost opposite to Ephesus, and St. John from his former occupation, before he became Apostle, was accustomed to the sea, it is not improbable that the journey, or voyage, which he proposed to make, was by sea from Ephesus to Corinth.

<sup>1</sup> Ver. 6. ὡς καλῶς ποιήσεις προπεμψας.

## CHAP. XXXIII.

## OF THE APOCALYPSE.

## SECT. I.

*Previous apology for the author's uncertainty, in respect to the Apocalypse.*

**I** COME now to an important, but at the same time the most difficult and the most doubtful book in the whole New Testament. The various questions, which here present themselves for examination, whether they relate to the style of the Apocalypse, or the year in which it was published, or the qualifications, which every man must necessarily possess, who attempts to expound it, depend entirely on the main question, whether it is a genuine work of St. John the Evangelist, or not. And on the main question I candidly confess, that I have not been able to obtain that certainty, which I have obtained in respect to other books of the New Testament: consequently I shall be frequently obliged to speak of the dependent questions in a manner merely conditional and hypothetical. In the whole of this inquiry therefore I will accompany the reader as far as I think we can go with safety: I will point out to him likewise all the prospects which lie before him: but when we are arrived at the place, where the path divides, I shall think proper to halt, and leave it to his own choice to take that road, which appears to him the best.

As it is not improbable, that this cautious method of proceeding will give offence to some of my readers, I must plead in my behalf the example of Luther, who thought and acted precisely in the same manner. His sentiments on this subject are delivered, not in an occasional dissertation on the Apocalypse, but in the preface

to



to his German translation of it, a translation designed not merely for the learned, but for the illiterate, and even for children. In the preface prefixed to that edition, which was printed in 1522, he expressed himself in very strong terms<sup>m</sup>: but in that which he printed in 1534, he used milder and less decisive expressions. Still however he declared, he was not convinced that the Apocalypse was canonical, and recommended the interpretation of it to those, who were more enlightened than himself<sup>n</sup>. If Luther then, the author of our reformation,

<sup>m</sup> In this preface he says: ‘In this book of the Revelation of St. John, I leave it to every man to judge for himself: I will bind no man to my fancy or opinion: I say only what I feel. Not one thing only fails in this book, so that I hold it neither for apostolical, nor prophetic. First and chiefly, the Apostles do not prophesy in visions, but in clear and plain words, as St. Peter, St. Paul, and Christ in the Gospel do: it is moreover the Apostle’s duty to speak of Christ and his actions in a simple way, not in figures and visions. Also no prophet of the Old Testament, much less of the New, has so treated throughout his whole book of nothing but visions: so that I put it almost in the same rank with the fourth book of Esdras, and cannot any way find that it was dictated by the Holy Ghost. Besides, I think it too much, that in his own book, more than in any other of the holy books, which are of much greater importance, he commands and threatens, that, if any man shall take away from the words of this book, God shall take away his part out of the book of life; and moreover declares, that he who keepeth the words of this book, shall be blessed, though no one is able to understand what they are, much less to keep them: also there are much nobler books, the words of which we have to keep. In former times likewise many of the fathers rejected this book, though St. Jerom talks in high words, and says it is above all praise, and that there is much mystery therein. Lastly, let every one think of it what his own spirit suggests. My spirit can make nothing out of this book; and I have reason enough not to esteem it highly, since Christ is not taught in it, which an Apostle is above all things bound to do, as he says, Acts i. ye shall be my witnesses. Therefore I abide by the books which teach Christ clearly and purely.’

<sup>n</sup> In the preface to the edition printed in 1534, he divides prophecies into three classes, the third of which contains visions, without explanations of them, and of these he says: ‘As long as a prophecy remains unexplained and has no determinate interpretation, it is a hidden silent prophecy, and is destitute of the advantages, which it ought to afford to Christians. This has hitherto happened to the Apocalypse: for though many have made the attempt, no one to the present



tion, thought and acted in this manner, and the divines of the two last centuries still continued, without incurring the charge of heresy, to print Luther's preface to the Apocalypse, in the editions of the German Bible of which they had the superintendence, surely no one of the present age ought to censure a writer for the avowal of similar doubts. Should it be objected, that what was excusable in Luther would be inexcusable in a modern divine, since more light has been thrown on the subject than there had been in the sixteenth century, I would ask in what this light consists. If it consists in newly discovered testimonies of the ancients, they are rather unfavourable to the cause: for the canon of the Syrian church, which was not known in Europe, when Luther wrote, decides against it. On the other hand, if this light consists in a more clear and determinate explanation of the prophecies contained in the Apocalypse, which later commentators have been able to make out by the aid of history, I would venture to appeal to a synod of the latest and most zealous interpreters of it, such as Vitringa, Lange, Oporin, Heumann, and Bengel, names which are free from all suspicion, and I have not the least doubt that at every interpretation, which I pronounced unsatisfactory, I should have at least three voices out of the five in my favour. At all events they would never be unanimous against me, in the places where I declared that I was unable to perceive the new light, which is supposed to have been thrown on the subject since the time of Luther.

I admit that Luther uses too harsh expressions, where he speaks of the Epistle of St. James, though in a  
preface

present day has brought any thing certain out of it, but several have made incoherent stuff out of their own brain. On account of these uncertain interpretations, and hidden senses, we have hitherto left it to itself, especially since some of the ancient fathers believed that it was not written by the Apostle, as is related in Lib. III. Hist. Eccles. *In this uncertainty we for our part still let it remain: but do not prevent others from taking it to be the work of St. John the Apostle, if they choose. And because I should be glad to see a certain interpretation of it, I will afford to other and higher spirits occasion to reflect.*

preface not designed for Christians of every denomination: but his opinion of the Apocalypse is delivered in terms of the utmost diffidence, which are well worthy of imitation. And this is so much the more laudable as the Apocalypse is a book, which Luther's opposition to the church of Rome must have rendered highly acceptable to him, unless he had thought impartially and had refused to sacrifice his own doubts to polemical considerations.

Before I proceed in this inquiry, I think proper to acknowledge, that in the following introduction to the Apocalypse I have derived several important remarks from a treatise, which was communicated to me in manuscript, bearing the following title, *Discours historique et critique sur l' Apocalypse par Mr. d' A—t °*. The author of this treatise is indeed sometimes too severe in his censure of the fathers, and conducts the controversy in a tone, which is too satirical: yet it cannot be denied that the objections, which he has made to the Apocalypse, are of great importance. I have likewise made use of a composition delivered to me by one of my former pupils, when he quitted the university, whose name however I have not the liberty to mention, containing various doubts respecting the Apocalypse, with a request that, if possible, I would remove them. In the removal of some them I have been successful, though not in the removal of them all: but, as notice will be taken of them in the following sections, perhaps other critics will be able to answer what lies not within my power.

\* Mr. D'Abaugit, Public Librarian at Geneva.

## S E C T. II.

*Testimonies of the earliest ecclesiastical writers, both for and against the Apocalypse.*

EUSEBIUS, whom I mention first, because he is the principal ancient writer, who has collected accounts of the Canon, expresses himself, after having mentioned the unquestionable books of the New Testament, namely, the four Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, the Epistles of St. Paul, the first Epistle of St. Peter, and the first Epistle of St. John, in the following manner with respect to the Apocalypse. ‘To these may be added, if one chooses, the Revelation of St. John, on which I shall mention the opinions of the ancients in their proper places. And these are the Homologoumena<sup>p</sup>.’ He afterwards adds a list of the spurious books (*νοθα*) of the New Testament, as the History of Paul, the Shepherd, the Revelation of Peter, &c. which he distinguishes from an intermediate class containing books of only doubtful authority: and this class of spurious books he closes with the following words. ‘Further, if one chooses, the Revelation of St. John, which, as I have said, some reject, others reckon among the Homologoumena<sup>q</sup>.’ It appears then, that Eusebius, after all his inquiries into the Canon, had not been able to discover any thing decisive in respect to the Apocalypse, and consequently remained in doubt. But there is another passage in his Ecclesiastical history<sup>r</sup>, where he seems to deliver his own opinion, and in which he comes more to the point. In this passage, after having shewn from the writings

<sup>p</sup> Hist. Eccles. Lib. III. cap. 25.

<sup>q</sup> The whole passage, which is somewhat obscure, I have already quoted at length in Vol. III. ch. iv. sect. 9. of this Introduction.

<sup>r</sup> Lib. III. cap. 39.



writings of Papias, that beside St. John the Apostle, there lived at Ephesus a Presbyter of the same name, he adds: ‘This latter John was probably the person who saw the Revelation, unless it be insisted on, that it was the former.’ Upon the whole therefore Eusebius, who had not been able to obtain any historical certainty on this subject, took a middle road, and neither pronounced it a forgery, nor ascribed it to St. John the Apostle.

It is not to be expected, that we in the present age should be able to obtain the testimony of a greater number of ancient witnesses in respect to the Apocalypse than this first and great collector of materials for ecclesiastical history: and in general we must rest satisfied with the minutes, which he has taken. But as various circumstances may appear to us to be more decisive, than they did to Eusebius, and it is better, wherever we can, to examine for ourselves, than to trust to the report of others, we will inquire into the evidence of ecclesiastical writers prior to the time of Eusebius, who have either received the Apocalypse, or have openly rejected it, or have passed it over in such silence, that their silence amounts to a rejection of it.

The most ancient evidence, and who belongs perhaps to the last mentioned class of writers, is Ignatius. For he wrote Epistles to the Christian communities at Ephesus, Philadelphia, and Smyrna, which are three of the seven churches, to which the seven Epistles in the book of Revelation are addressed in the name of Christ. Yet Ignatius, though he particularly reminds the Ephesians of the praises bestowed on them by St. Paul, is totally silent both in his Epistle to the church of Ephesus, and his Epistles to the churches of Smyrna and Philadelphia, of the praises, which according to Rev. ii. 1—7, 8—11, iii. 7—12. their bishops had received from Christ himself. Under these circumstances may we not conclude, either that the Apocalypse was unknown to Ignatius, or that, if it was known to him, he did not believe it to be genuine? And may we not  
likewise



likewise infer, that if it was a genuine work of St. John the Apostle, it could not have remained unknown to Ignatius<sup>s</sup>?

The old Syriac translator, whom I mention immediately after Ignatius, because in my opinion he lived in the first century, did not translate the Apocalypse: consequently, he either knew nothing of it, or did not believe it to be genuine. It is true, that the Apocalypse was afterwards translated into Syriac<sup>t</sup>: but it never was admitted into the Peshito, or Syriac Vulgate, which forms the Canon of the Syrian church.

Papias, who is represented by Eusebius as a man of great credulity, would be an evidence of the utmost importance against the Apocalypse, if it could be clearly and indisputably proved, that he had never quoted it. For his very credulity, how great soever it might have been, would, in case he rejected the Apocalypse, increase the weight of his testimony. Papias, who lived in the beginning of the second century, was, as is well known, the founder of the Millennarian system among the orthodox<sup>u</sup>. His opinion was, that after the general resurrection, Christ would reign upon earth a thousand years with the faithful: and it was this opinion, which induced Eusebius to ascribe to him the character of credulity<sup>x</sup>. Now it is certain, that in not any one book of the whole Bible the doctrine of the Millennium is taught in express terms, though many Millennarians have pretended, that several of the ancient prophets have spoken of it. But in the Apocalypse, and the Apocalypse alone, this doctrine is discoverable, if we take all the expressions used in the twentieth chapter in a strictly

<sup>s</sup> Knittel has endeavoured to obviate the force of this objection, in his Criticisms on the Revelation of St. John, p. 15. to which place I refer the reader.

<sup>t</sup> See Vol. II. ch. vii. sect. 10. of this Introduction.

<sup>u</sup> A very full account of Papias is given by Eusebius, Hist. Eccles. Lib. iii. cap. 39.

<sup>x</sup> See what I have said on this subject, Vol. III. ch. iv. sect. 4.

strictly literal sense: and this is the chapter on which all the Millennarians of modern ages have principally grounded their opinions. If then Papias, the father of the Millennarians, who made it likewise his particular business, to inquire into what had been said and done by the Apostles, has never quoted the Apocalypse, this silence must imply, that at the beginning of the second century the Apocalypse was unknown in Asia Minor, which is equivalent to its not then existing. For Papias was bishop of Hierapolis, a town not far from Laodicea, to the angel of which church one of the seven apocalyptic Epistles was addressed. Could then this prophetic book have remained unknown to him, if it had then existed? And if he had known it, would he have rejected a work, which would have been the best support of his favourite doctrine? And would not his very credulity have contributed to his acceptance of it, without sufficient examination of it, even though it had not been genuine.

If Papias then never quoted the Apocalypse, I do not see in what manner its authenticity can be defended. However, that he never did quote it is not quite so certain, as some critics have supposed, though every one, who reads the account given by Eusebius, will naturally draw this conclusion, and for the two following reasons.

1. After Eusebius has shewn from the writings of Papias, that beside St. John the Apostle there lived at Ephesus a Presbyter of the same name, he hazards a conjecture of his own, that this John the Presbyter was the person who saw the Revelation. Consequently Eusebius found in the writings of Papias this opinion neither asserted nor contradicted. But it is very extraordinary, that Papias, who made it his particular business to inquire of the elder Christians into every thing, which had been said and done by the Apostles, and who especially noted the difference between John the Apostle, and John the Presbyter, should have left wholly unnoticed, which of these two persons saw the Revelation, if the book itself had been known to him.

2. Eusebius

2. Eusebius represents Papias as grounding his doctrine of the Millennium, not on the Bible, but on certain expressions of Christ and his Apostles, handed down by oral tradition, which Papias understood in a too literal sense. But if Papias had been acquainted with the Apocalypse, he could have been under no necessity of having recourse to oral tradition, since the twentieth chapter of this book, when literally interpreted, would have much better suited his purpose. The words which Eusebius has used on this occasion are as follow. ‘ This writer (Papias) has mentioned several things, which he says, he learnt by oral tradition, such as parables and doctrines of our Saviour not contained in the Gospels, and also some things, which are fabulous. Among these may be reckoned the assertion, that, after the resurrection of the dead, Christ will reign in person a thousand years on earth. I suppose, that he acquired this notion from his inquiring into the sayings of the Apostles, and his not understanding what they had delivered figuratively.’

On the other hand, if we may credit the account given by Andrew, bishop of Cæsarea in Cappadocia, in the fifth century, Papias gave even testimony in favour of the Apocalypse. For Andrew says expressly in the preface to his commentary on the Apocalypse : ‘ Of the divine inspiration of this book I need not treat at large, since so many holy men, Gregory the divine, Cyril, and before them, Papias, Irenæus, and Hippolitus have given their testimony to it.’

To reconcile these two contradictory accounts, we must assume, either, that Andrew considered Papias’s defence of the Millennium as a virtual support of the Apocalypse, and that he therefore hastily asserted that Papias had borne testimony to this book, or that Eusebius had not read with sufficient attention the writings of Papias, for whom he had no great respect, and that he overlooked those passages, in which Papias perhaps quoted the Apocalypse in support of his millennarian principles. Either of these cases is possible: but which is the true one, it is impos-



fible to determine with absolute certainty, as the writings of Papias are no longer extant. It will appear however from what will be said in the fourth section of this chapter relative to Gregory of Nazianzum, that the error is probably on the side of Andrew. If Papias really knew and received the Apocalypse, he is by no means an important witness in its favour, because it is a book, to which his millennarian principles must have made him partial: if he knew it not, or if he had received it not, he is a decisive evidence against it. If he knew it not, it could not have been written even by John the Presbyter: but on the other hand, this will afford no argument in favour of the opinion, which some have maintained, that the Apocalypse was a forgery of Cerinthus: for if Cerinthus had been the author of it, Papias would undoubtedly have heard of it. The only inference to be deduced from Papias's total want of knowledge of it, would be, that it was forged by some unknown person about the year 120, between the time when Papias wrote, and the time when Justin Martyr wrote, for the latter was well acquainted with it, and received it also as a sacred work.

The words, in which Justin Martyr speaks of the Apocalypse, are the following'. 'A man among us, whose name was John, one of the Apostles of Christ, has in a Revelation, which was made to him, prophesied that the faithful in Christ shall live a thousand years in Jerusalem, and that afterwards the general and eternal resurrection and judgment of all men shall follow.'

Melito, who lived about the year 170, wrote a treatise entitled, 'On the devil, and the Revelation of St. John<sup>2</sup>.' Eusebius indeed does not declare whether Melito wrote for or against the Apocalypse, and it is not impossible, that Melito, as some other ancient writers have done, wrote in order to confute it. But as I think it not improbable, that this last work was an explanation of the visions in the Apocalypse, I reckon Melito among the witnesses in its favour.

Irenæus

<sup>1</sup> Page 308. of the Cologne edition.

<sup>2</sup> Euseb. Hist Eccles. Lib. iv. cap. 26.



Irenæus undoubtedly received the Apocalypse as a genuine work of St. John the Apostle; and likewise asserted, at least according to the common interpretation of his words, that the visions were seen by St. John, in the reign of Domitian<sup>a</sup>. This last assertion would, in my opinion, extremely weaken the testimony of Irenæus, because for reasons, which will be delivered hereafter, the Apocalypse can hardly be a canonical work, if it was written so late as the time of Domitian. But according to the very probable explanation, which Knittel, in his Criticisms on the Revelation of St. John, has given of this passage of Irenæus, the objection falls to the ground. Indeed the whole testimony of Irenæus in favour of the Apocalypse has been placed by Knittel in so very advantageous a light, that I must recommend to my readers, to consult what he has said on this subject, though he has advanced several opinions, which are directed against those, which I myself have supported.

From the writings of Athenagoras<sup>b</sup>, the Testament of the twelve Patriarchs<sup>c</sup>, as it is called, and the Clementine Recognitions<sup>d</sup>, Lardner has produced single allusions to the Apocalypse, which prove that the authors of those books were acquainted with it, but do not warrant the conclusion that they considered it, as a genuine work of St. John the Apostle. On the other hand, it was undoubtedly received as such by Theophilus of Antioch<sup>e</sup>, Clement of Alexandria<sup>f</sup>, and Tertullian<sup>g</sup>: and with their evidence ends the second century.

But in the same century there existed a sect, called the Alogi, who were acquainted with the Apocalypse, yet denied that it was genuine<sup>h</sup>. It is true, that a contradiction

<sup>a</sup> Lardner, Vol. II. B. I. p. 277, 278. 304.

<sup>b</sup> Ib. p. 338.

<sup>c</sup> Ib. p. 653, 654.

<sup>d</sup> Ib. p. 677.

<sup>e</sup> Ib. p. 366.

<sup>f</sup> Ib. p. 423.

<sup>g</sup> Ib. p. 523.

<sup>h</sup> On this subject the reader will find much valuable information in Körner's dissertation entitled, *De Auctoritate canonica Apocalypseos ab Alogis impugnata et ab Epiphania defensa*, published at Leipzig in

tradition on the part of the Alogi, who out of mere antipathy to the word *Λογος*, the name of Christ's divine nature, rejected the unquestionably genuine Gospel of St. John, and absurdly ascribed it to Cerinthus, is in itself of no great importance: nor was the estimation, in which they were held by their contemporaries, sufficient to inspire much respect for them, in a critic of the present age. Besides, as appears from the accounts, which Epiphanius has given of them in his fifty-first Heresy, they appealed not to external but to internal evidence, on which we are as well able to decide as they. One of their objections however, which is of an historical kind, is more deserving of consideration. The fourth Epistle in the Apocalypse, ch. ii. 18—29. is addressed to the Angel of the church at Thyatira: and the Alogi declared, that there existed no church at Thyatira. This objection of the Alogi Epiphanius has delivered in the following words, *καὶ οὐκ ἐνὶ ἐκείνῃ ἐκκλησίᾳ χριστιανῶν*. But these words are ambiguous: for they may denote, either that there was no Christian community at Thyatira, in the time of St. John, or no Christian community there, when the Alogi made their objections. If we ascribe to them the latter sense, the argument is of no importance; for if there was no church or Christian community at Thyatira in the middle of the second century, there might have been a Christian community there in the reign of Claudius, to which period Epiphanius refers the Apocalypse. But Mr. Merkel observes<sup>1</sup> that the Alogi could not well intend to say, that there was no Christian community at Thyatira in their own time: for there existed at Thyatira  
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1751: and in 'Merkel's historical and critical exposition of the controversies of the Alogi, and other writers on the Apocalypse in the second century, intended as an additional proof that the Apocalypse is a forgery. Leipzig 1782.

<sup>1</sup> Page 74—98. Mr. Merkel here treats at large of the strange answer given by Epiphanius to this objection of the Alogi: but I have not here sufficient room to make an extract from it. It must be admitted however that the answer of Epiphanius is very confused and uncritical, like most of the other replies, which he has made to the heretics.

a community of Alogi, who certainly considered themselves as Christians, and likewise another sect, who were opposed to the Alogi, and were called Phrygians. He further observes, that this objection has so much the greater weight, as it proceeds from the Alogi, because so many of this sect lived at Thyatira, that they must be supposed to have been well acquainted with the state of Christianity in that place. Now I grant that the argument is of some weight, but I do not admit that it is absolutely decisive. For, if the Alogi really asserted, that there was no Church at Thyatira, in the time of Claudius, it is still possible that they were mistaken in this assertion. There might have been a church at Thyatira in the time of Claudius, this church might have been of short duration, and have been dissolved, before any ecclesiastical accounts were committed to writing, to which the Alogi had access. Very few accounts are on record of the earliest ages of Christianity.

Further, the Alogi themselves have weakened their own cause by pushing their objection further, than it can possibly go: for they went so far as to ascribe the Apocalypse to Cerinthus. This is manifestly false: for Cerinthus, who made a distinction between the Supreme Being and the Creator of the Universe, would never have made the four and twenty elders, Rev. iv. 11. address the Supreme Being in the following words, 'Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure, they are, and were created.' Nor would he have made the angel, who stood upon the sea and upon the earth, Rev. x. 6, swear 'by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things, that therein are, and the earth, and the things, that are therein, and the sea, and the things, which are therein.' Nor would he have put into the mouth of another angel, Rev. xiv. 7. the words, 'Fear God and give glory to him, for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven and earth,

and the sea, and the fountains of waters.' Lastly, it is not probable that Cerinthus, if he had forged the *Apocalypse* in the name of St. John, would have made St. John write, Rev. ii. 2. 'Thou hast tried them, which say, they are Apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars,' without at least inserting some saving clause for himself. For as St. John and Cerinthus were declared adversaries, such a general description proceeding from the former, must necessarily include the latter.

Mr. Körner likewise remarks (§ 26) that Cerinthus, who considered Jesus as a mere man, would not have given to our Saviour the titles, which are applied to him in the *Apocalypse*, such as 'the prince of the kings of the earth' ch. i. 5. 'the beginning and the ending, the Almighty' ch. i. 8. and 'the first and the last' ch. i. 11. But in this respect I am not wholly of Mr. Körner's opinion: for though Cerinthus considered Jesus as a man born in the natural way, yet he might have applied to our Saviour after he was raised to glory, the title of 'prince of the kings of the earth,' without doing any violence to his own system, since this title does not necessarily denote the Supreme Being. The title 'Almighty' ver. 8. is in the Greek *παντοκρατωρ*, which has not necessarily that unlimited and sublime sense which we ascribe to the term 'Almighty.' We may render *παντοκρατωρ* by 'Lord of all,' or 'the universal king,' and this title Cerinthus, would not have refused to our Saviour in his state of glory. The other titles 'the beginning and the ending' ver. 8. and 'the first and the last' ver. 11. are wanting in most manuscripts of the *Apocalypse*. And in ch. i. 17. ii. 8. where *ὁ πρῶτος καὶ ὁ ἐσχάτος* again occurs, the Alexandrine MS. has *ὁ πρῶτοτοκος καὶ ὁ ἐσχάτος*, 'the first-born, and the last.'

Beside the Alogi there were other adversaries of the *Apocalypse*, who lived partly at the same time with them, and partly in the beginning of the third century, of whom however we know only of one person by name, and this is the Roman Presbyter Caius, provided the *Apocalypse*, of which he speaks, is the same as that,



which is contained in our canon. These adversaries of the Apocalypse must be carefully distinguished from the Alogi, for though they agreed in the same manifest error, that of ascribing the Apocalypse to Cerinthus, yet they materially differed in this respect, that the former received the Gospel of St. John, having no antipathy, like the Alogi to the term *Λογος*, the name of Christ's divine nature, and rejected the Apocalypse for other reasons, the principal of which was their disapprobation of the doctrine of the Millennium. The principles likewise, which Dionysius of Alexandria ascribes to the former, are very different from those, which Epiphanius assigns to the latter,

Of the adversaries of the Apocalypse, which are now the subject of our inquiry, to whom however I can give no distinguishing appellation, as they have never been placed in the catalogue of heretics, the only accounts now on record are contained in two passages of the Ecclesiastical history of Eusebius, B. iii. ch. 28. and B. vii. ch. 25. In the former place, which relates principally to Cerinthus, Eusebius quotes a short passage from the works of the Roman Presbyter Caius, who lived about the year 210, in which Caius speaks of an Apocalypse; but whether he means the Apocalypse contained in our canon, or some other book with this title, but now lost, is a question, on which the learned have been divided. Eusebius then gives a short extract from the writings of Dionysius, in which certain persons are mentioned, who lived in Egypt, and ascribed the Apocalypse, by which is certainly meant the same, as that which is contained in our canon, to Cerinthus. In the latter place, Eusebius gives a more copious extract from the writings of Dionysius, in which Dionysius mentions several particulars relative to the Apocalypse, and likewise delivers his own sentiments upon it. This Dionysius was appointed bishop of Alexandria in Egypt, in the year 247, and died either in 264 or 265. When therefore he says, 'some, who lived before our time, (*τινὲς τῶν πρὸ ἡμῶν*), ascribed to Cerinthus, the Apocalypse, which bears the

name of St. John,' it is not improbable that these adversaries of the Apocalypse were contemporaries of Caius. But they appear to have lived in Egypt : and as Dionysius has not mentioned Caius by name, it is not certain that Dionysius meant to include him under the general title ' some, who lived before our time.' Consequently, though the Apocalypse, of which Dionysius speaks, is undoubtedly the Apocalypse contained in our canon, yet his saying, that some who lived before his time ascribed the Apocalypse to Cerinthus, is no certain proof that Caius did so : for though Caius ascribed to Cerinthus the Apocalypse, of which he himself spake, it is at least possible that he meant some other work, now lost, which bore the same name. Whether he did, or did not, I will now proceed to examine.

The passage, in which the sentiments of Caius are delivered, Eusebius has quoted from a work of Caius, entitled *Ζητησις*, in the following words, but has unfortunately left us in the dark with respect to their connexion with what preceded and followed. *Αλλα και Κηρινθος ο δι' αποκαλυψεων, ως υπο Αποστολων μεγαλη γεγραμμενων, τερατολογιας ημιν ως δι' αγγελων αυτω δεδειγμενας ψευδομενος επεισαγει, λεγων μετα την αναστασιν επιγειον ειναι το βασιλειον του Χριστου και παλιν, επιθυμiais και ιδουαίς εν Ιερουσαλημ την σαρκα πολιτευομενην δαλευειν. Και εχθρος υπαρχων ταις γραφαις του Θεου, αριθμον χιλιονταετιας εν γαμω εορτης, θελων πλανα, λεγει γινεσθαι.* Here Caius condemns in very warm terms an Apocalypse, which he describes as a forgery of Cerinthus. But the question is ; does the short description, which Caius gives of this work, warrant the conclusion, that he meant the Apocalypse, which we ascribe to St. John, and consequently that he attributed our canonical Apocalypse to Cerinthus : or must we conclude, that he spake of some other work, bearing the same title, which he represented as a work forged by Cerinthus in the name of St. John ?

In the Apocalypse, of which Caius speaks, was taught the doctrine that Christ would reign a thousand years  
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on earth, and that Jerusalem would be the chief seat of his kingdom. Now that Christ will reign a thousand years with the faithful, is said in our Apocalypse, ch. xx. 4. : and, though no mention is made of Jerusalem by name in this chapter, yet 'the beloved city' ver. 9. which Gog and Magog should encompass, might from a comparison of Ezek. xxxviii, xxxix. where Gog is represented as encompassing the land of Israel, be easily explained of Jerusalem. Justin Martyr really understood it in this sense: and in ch. xxi. a city called expressly Jerusalem, is described as the seat of God and of the Lamb after the second resurrection. Of festivities and the indulgence of carnal appetites, which, according to the Apocalypse, of which Caius speaks, were to take place in this kingdom of a thousand years, no express mention is made in our Apocalypse: but interpreters in their explanation of a book frequently discover what is not literally contained in it. Besides, there is no necessity for taking the expression 'indulgence of carnal appetites' in its very worst sense, for it denotes, not solely the unlawful gratifications of promiscuous concubinage, but likewise the legitimate pleasures of the marriage state: and commentators do not usually represent the kingdom of a thousand years, which is to take place after the first resurrection, as a kingdom, in which the marriage state will be forbidden. Further, the expression *γαμος τε αειν*, ch. xix. 7. 9. though we consider it, as denoting the marriage of the lamb with the church, might suggest to a reader of the Apocalypse, the notion of festivities and enjoyments, which were to attend the celebration of the marriage.

It appears then, that Caius in the passage, of which he speaks of an Apocalypse, has some things, which are not literally contained in our canonical Apocalypse: and we must therefore conclude, either that he substituted interpretation for text, or that he spake of a different Apocalypse from that, which is contained in our canon. Mr. Hartwig, in his excellent '*Apology for*



for the Apocalypse<sup>k</sup>, supports the latter part of the alternative, and with great perspicuity of reasoning endeavours to shew, that Caius could not have spoken of our Apocalypse in the manner in which he has done. I confess however, that I am still in doubt. For, in the first place, it is evident, that whatever was the Apocalypse of which Caius spake, he was strongly prejudiced against it, and ascribed it to Cerinthus. Consequently, it is not at all extraordinary, that he should be unjust in the explanation of it, and ascribe to it doctrines, which it did not literally contain. And it will presently appear, that some others of the ancients, of whom no doubt can be made, that they meant our Apocalypse, were as unjust in their explanations of it, as Caius can be supposed to have been, and represented doctrines as really contained in it, which were in fact the invention of the Millennarians. Secondly, if Caius really meant an Apocalypse different from that, which is contained in our canon, it must afford just matter of surprise, that he should be the only writer of all antiquity, to whom this other Apocalypse appears to have been known; for not only no fragments of another Apocalypse are now extant, but no other writer has made the least mention of it. I own then, that I am disposed to accede to the opinion of those, who maintain, that the Apocalypse, which Caius attributed to Cerinthus, was no other than that, which we ascribe to St. John: and this opinion is strongly corroborated by the circumstance, that other persons, who were contemporaries of Caius, ascribed to Cerinthus that very Apocalypse, which is contained in our canon. An absolute decision is not to be obtained, since the writings of Caius are no longer extant, and other ancient authors, who had access to his writings, are not sufficiently explicit on this subject. Mr. Hartwig has indeed endeavoured

<sup>k</sup> Vol. I. p. 33—228. In my review of this work in the Orient. Biblioth. Vol. XXI. N<sup>o</sup> 312, I have delivered my sentiments at large, especially on what the author says relative to Caius.



endeavoured to shew, that the ancients did not understand Caius, as if he meant our canonical *Apocalypse*; but, though I grant, that Mr. Hartwig's *Apology* is in general a very admirable work, his arguments on this point have left me without conviction<sup>1</sup>.

Having examined the sentiments of Caius, I have in the next place to consider the opinion of the 'certain persons in Egypt,' who undoubtedly ascribed our *Apocalypse* to Cerinthus. The account of them is contained in the *Ecclesiastical History* of Eusebius, B. vii. ch. 25. where he has given a very important extract, from the 'books on the promises,' written by Dionysius, bishop of Alexandria.

At Arsinoe in Egypt the doctrine of the Millennium had gained such ground among the Christians, that it banished from their thoughts the most important precepts of their religion. The principal work, which had been written in that country in defence of the Millennium, was entitled *Ελεγχος αλληγοριστων* (*Confutation of the Allegorists*), and had Nepos, an Egyptian bishop, for its author, who endeavoured to prove this doctrine from the Revelation of St. John. Nepos was already deceased, when Dionysius, in the year 247, was appointed bishop of Alexandria; he lived therefore about the beginning of the century, and consequently at this period the Revelation of St. John was already received in Egypt. Dionysius openly opposed the doctrine of the Millennium, not indeed with that vehemence, which we have sometimes occasion to censure in the ancient fathers, but with a moderation and gentleness, which would do honour to the present age. In a dialogue, written in a very friendly tone<sup>m</sup>, he confuted the above mentioned work of Nepos in so successful a manner,

<sup>1</sup> See what I have said in the review mentioned in the preceding note.

<sup>m</sup> An account of this dialogue is given by Eusebius at the end of the 24th chapter of the seventh book of his *Ecclesiastical History*.

a manner, that he convinced every one, who had adopted the principles of Nepos, that they were erroneous. He then wrote his two ‘books on the promises,’ from which I will quote the following passage, preserved in the above-mentioned chapter of Eusebius, because it affords a proof of the mild character of Dionysius. ‘Since they appeal to a work of Nepos, and ground their opinions upon it, as if it indisputably proved a future kingdom of Christ on earth, I will grant indeed, that in many respects I follow Nepos, and that I esteem him on account of his faith, his labours, his diligence in expounding the Bible, and also on account of his hymns, which many of our brethren still use to their edification; and I have so much the more respect for him, as he is gone to his rest before us; but the truth is dearer and more valuable to me than every thing else.’ He then proceeds to mention the great repute, in which this work of Nepos then stood, and after having observed, what injury millennarian principles had done, he concludes with the following words, ‘I felt myself therefore under the necessity of disputing with my brother Nepos in the same manner, as if he were still alive.’ The opinion, which Dionysius himself entertained of the Apocalypse, will be delivered in its proper place, when the order of time brings us to him. At present I shall add only the passage preserved by Eusebius<sup>a</sup>, in which Dionysius relates how some persons, who lived before his time, and therefore probably about the beginning of the third century, condemned the Apocalypse. ‘Some, who lived before our time<sup>o</sup>, have totally rejected this book, They find something

<sup>a</sup> B. vii. Ch. 25.

<sup>o</sup> *Τινες των προ ημων.* The obvious interpretation of these words is, ‘some teachers of Christianity in Egypt, who lived at the beginning of the third, or at the end of the second century.’ Whether Dionysius had the Roman presbyter Caius likewise in view, is a question not easily to be determined. As to the word *τινες*, Mr. Hartwig considers it, as denoting persons very inconsiderable both in  
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something to censure in every chapter: they endeavour to shew, that the whole is obscure and unconnected: and they accuse even the title of it of containing falsehoods, since it is neither a work of St. John, nor can be called a Revelation, because every thing in it is concealed under a thick covering of darkness. They consider, not only no Apostle, but no pious member of the church whatsoever, as the author of this book: but ascribe it to Cerinthus, who falsely prefixed a respectable name to a work, which he himself had forged. What this man, sensual and drunken in carnal indulgencies, himself desired, this (they say) he prophesied, namely the satiating of the belly, and the gratification of fleshly lusts, by eating, drinking, marrying, and, in order to render the matter less offensive, by feasts and feast-offerings.' From the preceding description it appears, that some of the reasons assigned by these persons for rejecting the book of Revelation were weak; for instance, the argument, that it cannot be called a Revelation, because it is obscure, which is a mere dispute about words: and moreover, that they found in it what it does not literally contain. But the fact itself, namely, that certain adversaries of the Millennium, at the end of the second and the beginning of the third century, denied, that St. John was the author of the Apocalypse, is a matter not to be disputed. They pushed however their objection beyond the bounds of probability in ascribing it to Cerinthus. Before I conclude this paragraph, I must recommend to the reader to consult what Lardner<sup>p</sup> has said on this passage of Dionysius, as he has made some very excellent remarks.

I now

number and in consequence. But for my own part, I see nothing contemptible in this expression: at least I myself have frequently used the term 'some say,' when the persons, whom I had in view, were men of great reputation, or not inconsiderable as to their number.

<sup>p</sup> Credibility, P. II. Vol. ii. p. 620—684.

I now come to an advocate for the Apocalypse, whose authority contributed perhaps more, than is commonly supposed, to its reception in the church, namely the bishop and martyr Hippolytus, who lived, as is generally believed, in the beginning of the third century, and is supposed, though this is not quite certain, to have been bishop of Aden in Arabia Felix. The whole tendency of his writings appears to have been apocalyptical: at least the title of the books, ‘on the Song of Solomon, on Zacharias, on Daniel, on some passages in Ezekiel, on Antichrist,’ discover contents, which are closely allied to the Apocalypse. In his book on Antichrist he says expressly, ‘St. John saw in the island of Patmos dreadful mysteries, which he taught to others without envy:’ and immediately after he addresses St. John in the following words, ‘Tell me, holy John, thou Apostle and Disciple of Christ, what thou hast seen of Babylon.’ Among the writings of Hippolytus, Jerom mentions one, which was entitled, ‘on the Apocalypse:’ and on the statue of Hippolytus, discovered at Rome in 1551, on which are engraved the titles of his writings, one of them is, ‘on St. John’s Gospel and the Apocalypse<sup>1</sup>.’ Lardner supposes, that it was a defence of these two books, because Ebedjesu expressly mentions, that Hippolytus wrote such a work. Lardner however at the same time observes, that Andrew of Cæsarea has several times quoted a commentary on the Apocalypse, ascribed to Hippolytus<sup>2</sup>. This Ebedjesu, in the seventh chapter of his metrical catalogue of ecclesiastical writings, mentions among other works of Hippolytus,

Chapters against Caius :  
And a defence of the Apocalypse,  
And the Gospel of St. John,  
The Apostlé and Evangelist.

This

<sup>1</sup> Περὶ τῆ κατὰ Ἰωάννην εὐαγγελίου καὶ ἀποκαλύψεως.

<sup>2</sup> Lardner’s Credibility, P. II. Vol. ii. ch. 35.



This defence must have been opposed to the Alogi, because it relates to the Gospel as well as to the Apocalypse, and the Alogi were the only persons, who rejected both. The Caius, against whom he wrote certain chapters, is commonly supposed to be the heretic Caius, mentioned by Irenæus. But as the Apocalypse was the favourite subject of Hippolytus, it is not improbable, that these chapters were written against the Roman presbyter Caius, and contained likewise a defence of the Apocalypse, perhaps also of the Millennium, and of the doctrine concerning Antichrist. If this representation be just, Hippolytus wrote two defences of the Apocalypse, the one against Caius, the other against the Alogi, who rejected, beside the Apocalypse, the Gospel of St. John.

Further, Jacob, the Syrian, who was bishop of Edeffa from the year 651 to the year 710, has quoted in terms of the highest commendation, a commentary on the Apocalypse by Hippolytus. This quotation is in the Syriac works of Ephrem, Vol. I. p. 192. of the edition printed at Rome, where there is a commentary on Genesis, formed partly from the writings of Ephrem, and partly from those of Jacob. In the place in question Jacob explains Gen. xlix. 17. of Antichrist, and says: 'The Spirit, which is in the saints, interprets this power as denoting the Roman empire. This was made known by the Spirit, who spake by the mouth of the holy bishop and martyr Hippolytus, when he explained the Revelation of St. John the Divine.' Whether this exposition or commentary on the Apocalypse was a separate work, or only interwoven with his defence of the Apocalypse, or his book on Antichrist, it is difficult at present to determine: but this evidently appears, that Hippolytus was highly esteemed by some of the Syrian writers. His works, of which some perhaps were written in Syriac, and translated into Greek,

[illegible]

Greek, must have remained many ages in the East, before they were lost: for they were still quoted in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries by Barfalibæus and Barhebræus<sup>†</sup>.

The next writer after Hippolytus is Origen, who, notwithstanding his warm opposition to the doctrine of the Millennium, received likewise the Apocalypse as a work of St. John the Apostle. The words of Origen, as quoted by Eusebius<sup>‡</sup>, are as follow. ‘What shall we say of John, who leaned on the breast of Jesus? He has left us a Gospel, and has assured us, that he could write more, than the whole world could contain. He wrote likewise a Revelation, in which he was ordered to seal up those things, which the seven thunders uttered: also an Epistle, of a moderate length, and perhaps a second and a third.’ Here every one must be desirous to know what reasons induced Origen, who took so decided a part against the doctrine of the Millennium, to receive the Apocalypse, without expressing any doubt of its authenticity: but these reasons he has no where assigned. Did the example and authority of Hippolytus, who served in some respects as a pattern to Origen, influence his opinion? or was he actuated by other motives? or did he conduct himself in the same manner, as we have reason to believe his disciple Dionysius did, whose opinion will be examined in the following paragraph?

Dionysius, the modest adversary of the Millennarians, was a disciple of Origen, and survived his master only eleven or twelve years<sup>‡</sup>. I have already related what Dionysius has said concerning the opinion of certain adversaries of the Apocalypse: at present we have to examine, what his own opinion was. This was a medium between the opinion of those, who ascribe the  
Apoca-

<sup>†</sup> Assemani Bibl. Orient. Tom. II. p. 158, 283—314.

<sup>‡</sup> Hist. Eccles. Lib. VI. cap. 25. More passages to this purpose are collected by Lardner, P. II. Vol. ii.

<sup>‡</sup> Origen died in 253, Dionysius in 264 or 265.

Apocalypse to St. John the Apostle, and the opinion of those, who consider it as a forgery of Cerinthus. He assigns very important reasons, which discover a sound critical judgment, for not believing that St. John the Apostle was the author of it : but he does not reject it as a forgery, for he adds, that it was written perhaps by some other John, who was likewise an holy inspired man. Now this decisive mode of expressing himself on the one side, and his dubious mode of expressing himself on the other, renders it a matter of doubt, whether Dionysius believed in his heart, that the Apocalypse was really a divine work. In his ‘two books on the promises,’ his great object was to confute the doctrine of the Millennium : if then the Apocalypse was at that time received in Egypt as a divine work, he would have defeated his own purpose if he had openly rejected it. The only plan, which he could adopt with safety, was to argue from premises admitted by his adversaries, and granting the authority of the Apocalypse, to shew, that not even this book, when properly explained, contained a proof of their doctrine, since the passages to which they appealed, were capable of a different interpretation from that of a thousand years kingdom of Christ on earth, all which, according to Eusebius, he did very fully and completely. This plan was perfectly consistent with the gentle character of Dionysius, and deserves not so much the name of a pious fraud, as that of an hypothetical confutation. At least I am certain, that if in a controversy between a catholic and a protestant, relative to a point of doctrine, the catholic appealed to a book of the Apocrypha, which the church of Rome receives as canonical, but the reformed church does not, and the protestant, instead of refusing to admit the appeal, should concede it to his adversary, without entering into its merits, but shew at the same time, that not even the passages appealed to contained a proof of the doctrine in question, no one would accuse the protestant of dissimulation or dishonesty. In fact, Dionysius takes great pains to prove that the Apocalypse was not



written by St. John the Apostle, and his arguments are of great weight : but this point being once proved, the canonical authority of the Apocalypse must totter of itself. For though it should be granted, that the author of it was not an impostor, but that he was a respectable man, and had no intention to deceive, yet what security can we have that he was not deceived himself, and that he was not hurried away by the force of his own imagination. I accede therefore, to the opinion of Lardner, who says, that Dionysius undoubtedly knew what he was doing, and that it was not without reason, that he took so much pains to shew, that the Apocalypse was not written by an Apostle. On the other hand, the reasons, which Dionysius assigns for his not venturing to reject the Apocalypse, are wholly devoid of importance. One of them is, ‘ because many of his brethren highly esteemed it : ’ but this is a motive of mere delicacy, and may be a reason why an author should not openly reject a book, lest his brethren should be offended, but it affords no ground of private conviction. His other reason is still more extraordinary, namely, that he was unable to explain the Apocalypse, and therefore could not reject it, but must admire it the more, the less he understood it. Now I grant, that a book containing prophecies is not immediately to be rejected, merely because we do not understand it : for the fault may lie with us, and a prophecy may be unintelligible till it is fulfilled. But when the question is in agitation, whether a book, which lays claim to prophecy, ought to be received or not, the circumstance that we do not understand it cannot possibly afford a positive argument for its reception. For at that rate every obscure fanatical composition of the present age, such as Oettinger’s terrestrial and celestial philosophy, would be entitled to the appellation of a divine work. Dionysius’s own words, in which he assigns the two preceding reasons, are as follow. ‘ I will not however venture to reject the Apocalypse, because many of the brethren highly esteem it. On the contrary, I apprehend,



hend, that this book surpasses my comprehension, and that it is full of mysterious things. And as I do not understand it, I suppose, that the words have a certain hidden meaning, which I do not pretend to measure, or to judge according to my capacity; but I behold them in faith as things above my comprehension. I do not reject what I do not comprehend, but admire it the more the less I understand it.' Now I have not the least doubt, that, if any modern writer should assign these reasons, and these reasons only, for not rejecting the Apocalypse, every man would immediately conclude that in reality he did not believe it. Much more then are we warranted to draw this inference of one of the ancient fathers, who were accustomed to argue, as it is called, *secundum œconomiam*: and d'A—t observes, in his above-mentioned Discours sur l'Apocalypse, that even Athanasius has taken notice of this œconomical mode of argumentation in Dionysius. All that we can say then of the sentiments of Dionysius, is, that they were a medium between the opinion of those, who ascribed the Apocalypse to St. John the Apostle, and the opinion of those, who declared it to be a forgery of Cerinthus. That it was not written by St. John he positively asserts; and that he did not in his heart believe it to be a divine work, is at least highly probable, though I grant that in one instance, namely, in an Epistle to Hermammon, he quotes a passage of it as fulfilled in the reign of Valerian<sup>2</sup>.

But whatever was the opinion of Dionysius in respect to the Apocalypse, we must recollect that his reasons for not ascribing it to St. John are not historical, but critical<sup>3</sup>; consequently their importance depends, not on the antiquity of the writer who assigned them, but merely on their own internal strength. Further, since Dionysius

<sup>2</sup> Euseb. Hist. Eccles. Lib. VII. c. 10.

<sup>3</sup> On this account I reserve them for the section in which I shall examine the language of the Apocalypse.

nysius has quoted no historical evidence, or testimony of any more ancient writer against the Apocalypse, this circumstance is in some measure in its favour. For, if it were not written by St. John, we have reason to wonder that neither Dionysius, nor his predecessors, neither the Alogi, nor Caius should have alleged against a work, supposed to have been first ushered into the world about the year 120, any arguments like the following: it is not preserved in the archives of the seven Asiatic churches: the oldest persons in those cities have no knowledge of its having been sent thither: no one ever saw it during the life of John: it was introduced in such and such a year, but was contradicted as soon as it appeared. Arguments like these would have at once determined the question in dispute: but since we meet with no such arguments in the writings of the ancient adversaries of the Apocalypse, its very adversaries have given it, I will not say a decisive advantage<sup>b</sup>, but certainly an advantage, which merits consideration.

After the age of Dionysius, the number of ecclesiastical writers who quote the Apocalypse as a divine work, especially the members of the Latin church, begins to increase. But as they are of less importance than the more ancient writers, and I have little or nothing to remark on their quotations, I shall content myself with barely mentioning their names, and referring to Lardner, by whom their quotations are collected. According to Lardner then the Apocalypse is quoted by Cyprian<sup>c</sup>, by the anonymous author of a work against the Novatians<sup>d</sup>, by the Novatians themselves<sup>e</sup>, by Commodian<sup>f</sup>, by Victorinus<sup>g</sup>, who was a very zealous advocate for the doctrine

<sup>b</sup> The advantage is for two reasons not decisive: first, because only a few extracts from the writings of the ancient adversaries of the Apocalypse are now extant, the writings themselves being lost: and secondly, because the ancient advocates of the Apocalypse have likewise not alleged any historical arguments in its defence.

<sup>c</sup> See Lardner's *Credibility of the Gospel History*, Part II. Vol. II. p. 777, 778.

<sup>d</sup> *Ib.* p. 812.

<sup>e</sup> P. II. Vol. III. p. 100.

<sup>f</sup> *Ib.* p. 127.

<sup>g</sup> *Ib.* p. 202, 216, 217.

doctrine of the Millennium, and likewise wrote an Exposition of the Apocalypse, by Methodius<sup>b</sup>, the Manicheans<sup>i</sup>, Arnobius<sup>k</sup>, the Donatists<sup>l</sup>, and by Lactantius<sup>m</sup>, who was a contemporary of Eusebius, but by no means equal to him in a critical inquiry like the present. On the Manicheans however I must make one remark, because Beausobre and Lardner are of different opinions in respect to their reception of the Apocalypse. The reason assigned by Lardner for his opinion, that the Manicheans received the Apocalypse as a canonical book, is that their adversaries sometimes confuted them by quotations from it. Beausobre<sup>n</sup> on the contrary contends that the Manicheans could not have received the Apocalypse, because, when their sect was founded, it had not been translated into Syriac, and Manes, the founder of their sect, whose native language was Syriac or Chaldee, did not understand Greek. But though I grant that the Syriac version of the Apocalypse, which we have at present, was made long after the time of Manes, it is possible that a still more ancient version of it existed, from which perhaps Ephrem quoted: and in this more ancient version, Manes, who was born in the year 240, might have read the Apocalypse, though it made no part of the Syrian Vulgate. Further, as it is said that Hippolytus, the most ancient advocate of the Apocalypse, was bishop of Aden in Arabia, and as Scythian, the predecessor of Manes, was a native Arabian, it must appear still less improbable that the Manicheans were acquainted with the Apocalypse. On the other hand, if they received it merely in consequence of the defence of Hippolytus, their reception of it can hardly be alleged as an additional proof of its divinity.

We now return to Eusebius, with whose opinion I began this section: but I much doubt, whether all the evidence,

<sup>b</sup> Part II. Vol. III. p. 256, 257.

<sup>i</sup> Ib. p. 688.

<sup>k</sup> P. II. Vol. IV. p. 53.

<sup>l</sup> Ib. p. 233.

<sup>m</sup> Ib. p. 183.

evidence, which we have examined has brought us a step nearer to the decision of the main question, than we were when we set out, or whether we are better able to form a determinate opinion, than Eusebius. That Origen, notwithstanding his dislike to the doctrine of the Millennium, received the Apocalypse as canonical, is a circumstance greatly in its favour: but that Papias, the father of the Millennarians, knew nothing of it, is a circumstance which operates at least as strongly against it. And upon the whole, when we place in one scale the few, but important writers, who either knew nothing of it or rejected it, and in the other scale the more numerous but less important writers, who received it, the balance will remain in the same equipoise, in which Eusebius himself appears to have regarded it.

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### S E C T. III.

#### *Inference deduced from the preceding section.*

**H**AVING examined the evidence for and against the Apocalypse, I must now propose the question: How is it possible, that this book, if really written by St. John the Apostle, should have either been wholly unknown, or considered as a work of doubtful authority, in the very earliest ages of Christians? The other Apostolical Epistles are addressed only to single communities or churches: but the Apocalypse, according to its own contents, was expressly ordered by Christ himself, in a command to St. John the Apostle, to be sent to seven churches: and not only these seven churches were in that part of Asia Minor, where Christianity was in the most flourishing situation, but one of them was Ephesus, where St. John spent the latter part of his life, and consequently



requently where every work of St. John must have been perfectly well known. If St. John then had actually sent the Apocalypse to these seven churches, and that too, not as a private Epistle, but as a Revelation made to him by Jesus Christ, one should suppose that its authenticity could not have been doubted, especially at a time, when there were the best means of obtaining information. We cannot say that the book was kept secret, or was concealed in the archives, lest the prophecies against Rome should draw a persecution on the Christians; for secrecy is contrary to the tenor of the book, and the author of it enjoins that it should be both read and heard°. Under these circumstances the authenticity of the Apocalypse appears to me very doubtful, and I cannot avoid entertaining a suspicion, that it is a spurious production, introduced probably into the world after the death of St. John.

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#### S E C T. IV.

*Of the opinions of ecclesiastical writers who lived since the time of Eusebius.*

**E**USEBIUS, who was in possession of almost all the information, which has been communicated in the preceding sections, remained, as we have seen, in doubt. Some centuries later, these doubts considerably abated, especially among the members of the Latin church, who at last received the Apocalypse almost unanimously. Here we may justly ask: What new discoveries were made by the church of Rome precisely in the ages of ignorance and barbarism, which enabled it to see clearly what remained obscure to Eusebius? We cannot suppose that

° Ch. i. 3.

that the members of this church had access to ancient documents, which were unknown to Eusebius: nor is it credible that they had so much more critical sagacity, as to enable them from the documents and evidence, which they had in common with Eusebius, to draw a decisive inference, where he remained in doubt, and to detect a truth, to which he was unable to penetrate. I admit that cases may occur, in which later and even less enlightened ages may be better able to determine, whether a book which lays claim to prophecy, be really a divine work, or not, than former and more enlightened ages, because the fulfilling of prophecies affords the best proof of their being divine, and this can be known only to posterity. But then the prophecies must be so clear and determinate, as to leave no room for doubt that they really relate to the events to which they are referred. Now this is so far from being the case in regard to the Apocalypse, that to this very day the commentators are not agreed as to its meaning: and the events, which protestants suppose are predicted in it, could never enter into the imagination of the members of the Latin church, when they admitted it into the canon.

As it would be useless to enumerate all the later writers, who have either received or rejected the Apocalypse, since the time of its composition is so far removed from the ages in which they lived, that they cannot be considered as evidence, I shall merely refer to the writings of Lardner. That most of the later Latin fathers received the Apocalypse has been already observed: I will proceed therefore at present to examine what was said by the Greek writers after the time of Eusebius, from whom we may reasonably expect more satisfactory information relative to a book addressed to seven churches in Asia Minor.

Epiphanius, who on account of the diligence which he bestowed on ecclesiastical history, deserves to be mentioned the first after Eusebius, though he had neither the same calm judgment, nor the same critical penetration, received the Apocalypse, and defended it, in his  
 ✕ fifty-

fifty-first Heresy, against the Alogi, who rejected both the Apocalypse and St. John's Gospel. But Epiphanius himself does not appear to have been so thoroughly persuaded of the divinity of the former, as he was of the divinity of the latter: for he says, that, if the Alogi received the Gospel of St. John, he would ascribe their rejection of the Apocalypse to their caution not to admit an apocryphal book<sup>p</sup>. Now, when we consider that this declaration was made by a writer, who was at other times accustomed to speak in rather ungentle terms against heretics, his defence of the Apocalypse as a divine book must appear somewhat inconsistent with so dubious an opinion respecting those who rejected it.

In the catalogue of sacred writings annexed to the canons of the council of Laodicea, which was held in the year 363, the Apocalypse is totally omitted. Now, if this catalogue be genuine, it is very unfavourable to the Apocalypse, because one of the apocryphical Epistles is addressed to the bishop of Laodicea, and therefore a council of bishops assembled in that city may be supposed to be competent judges of the question, whether the Apocalypse was sent by St. John to the bishop of Laodicea, or not. But Professor Spittler has, as I think, very clearly shewn, that the whole of the sixteenth canon, which contains this catalogue is a forgery<sup>q</sup>: and therefore this catalogue cannot be alleged in future as evidence against the Apocalypse.

Cyril of Jerusalem, who was bishop of that city from the year 350 to 386, not only omitted the Apocalypse in his catalogue of canonical writings, but concluded this catalogue by warning every one not to read even in his own house the books which he had omitted, as being books not read in the church<sup>r</sup>. And he himself, in the very place where he treats of the doctrine relative to Antichrist,

<sup>p</sup> The words of Epiphanius have been already quoted in this volume, Ch. xxxi. Sect. 4.

<sup>q</sup> See his 'Critical Inquiry into the sixteenth canon of the council of Laodicea,' published at Bremen in 1777.

<sup>r</sup> Lardner, P. II. Vol. VIII. p. 270.

Antichrist, appeals to the book of Daniel, to Matth. xxiv., and 2 Theff. ii., without even naming the Apocalypse<sup>s</sup>.

Gregory of Nazianzen is of great importance in the present inquiry, not so much on his own account, as on account of an inference which may be drawn from him in respect to Papias. Gregory in his metrical catalogue of canonical writings mentions the seven Catholic Epistles, including therefore even those of which the authenticity had been called in question. Yet he wholly omits the Apocalypse: and concludes his catalogue by saying, that the books, which he has not mentioned are spurious. But notwithstanding this, Andrew of Cæsarea in the preface to his Exposition of the Apocalypse has mentioned Gregory among the advocates for the Apocalypse. If Andrew then has made so gross a mistake in respect to Gregory, his assertion that Papias likewise was an advocate for the Apocalypse is entitled to no credit: and we may infer from the arguments advanced in the second section of this chapter, that Papias neither quoted nor even knew of the Apocalypse. How strongly this operates against the Apocalypse has been already noticed in its proper place. On the other hand, though Gregory has rejected the Apocalypse from his catalogue of canonical books, yet according to Lardner<sup>t</sup> he has quoted it in two instances. Since therefore it may be doubted, whether Andrew was so grossly mistaken in respect to Gregory, and consequently whether he made a similar mistake in respect to Papias, I will rather leave the question undecided, that every man may draw the inference which he thinks the best.

Gregory of Nyssa places the Apocalypse among the apocryphal writings<sup>u</sup>.

Amphilochius, who was bishop of Iconium about the year 370, says in his metrical catalogue of canonical books, 'Some ascribe the Apocalypse to St. John, but most persons consider it as spurious<sup>x</sup>.' In fact, it was almost

<sup>s</sup> Lardner, P. II. Vol. VIII. p. 274.

<sup>t</sup> Vol. IX. p. 133—136.

<sup>u</sup> Ib. p. 157.

<sup>x</sup> Ib. p. 148.



almost universally considered as such by the members of the Greek church at the end of the fourth century. Hence Jerom, in an Epistle to Dardanus, says that the Greek church rejected the Apocalypse with the same freedom as the Latin church rejected the Epistle to the Hebrews, though he himself regarded the rejection of both of them as an innovation, which he disapproved<sup>7</sup>: and Junilius, an African bishop of the sixth century, says, ‘cæterum de Johannis Apocalypsi apud Orientales admodum dubitatur<sup>2</sup>.’ The authority of the Apocalypse therefore, instead of gaining, lost ground among the Greeks: and Lardner acknowledges, not only that the two celebrated Greek commentators, Chrysostom in the fourth, and Theophylact in the eleventh century, have not quoted it in a single instance, but that Nicephorus, Patriarch of Constantinople, about the year 806 expressly rejected it\*. All the Greek writers however, after the time of Eusebius did not reject it: for Cyril of Alexandria speaks of it in doubtful terms, and Athanasius, Dionysius falsely called the Areopagite, Andrew of Cæsarea, Aretas, Œcumenius, and Nicephorus Callisti, received it.

Before I close the catalogue of Greek authorities for the Apocalypse, I must say a few words relative to the Greek manuscripts. Some of them contain the Apocalypse alone. Now from such manuscripts we are not authorised to conclude, that at the time when they were written, this book was received as canonical in the Greek church of which the copyist was a member: nor does even the title, or subscription, in which the Apocalypse is ascribed to St. John the Evangelist prove any thing, since in the copies of spurious, as well as of genuine works

<sup>7</sup> Quod si eam (scil. epist. ad Hebræos) Latinorum consuetudo non recipit inter scripturas canonicas, nec Græcorum ecclesiæ Apocalypsin eadem libertate suscipiunt, et tamen nos utramque suscipimus, nequaquam hujus temporis consuetudinem, sed veterum auctoritatem sequentes. Hieronymi Opp. Tom. II. p. 608.

<sup>2</sup> Lardner, Vol. XI. p. 298.

\* Vol. X. p. 340. Vol. XI. 249. 252. 428.

works it is usual to retain the titles unaltered. There are other manuscripts, which contain no other book than the Apocalypse, but have it accompanied with a commentary: such for instance is the Codex Reuchlini<sup>a</sup>, which contains the text of the Apocalypse, together with the commentaries of Andrew of Cæsarea, and Aretas. Such manuscripts prove no more than the preceding, that the Apocalypse was received as canonical in the Greek church, at the time when they were written. To a third class may be referred such as the Codex Alexandrinus, which contains the whole Bible, and with it the Apocalypse. But then the Codex Alexandrinus contains likewise other books, which are certainly not canonical, for instance, the first Epistle of Clement to the Corinthians, and also several hymns. Consequently we cannot infer, that the writer of this manuscript considered the Apocalypse as canonical: for if we draw this conclusion of the Apocalypse, we must draw the same in respect to the first Epistle of Clement, and the other uncanonical books which this manuscript contains. The fourth and last class consists of such manuscripts as contain the Apocalypse in company with books undoubtedly canonical, of which the Codex Seidelianus<sup>b</sup> is an instance. That the writers of such manuscripts considered the Apocalypse as canonical, is very probable: but then these manuscripts are for the most part modern. An enumeration of the several manuscripts, which belong to each of these four classes, would take up at present too much room: and indeed it would be attended with some difficulty as our accounts of several manuscripts of the Apocalypse are very defective.

The fate of the Apocalypse in the Latin church was very different from that, which it met with in the Greek. Both churches deviated from the medium adopted

<sup>a</sup> See No. 221, in the catalogue of Greek MSS. given in the second volume of this Introduction.

<sup>b</sup> See No. 228, of the above-mentioned catalogue.

adopted by Eusebius. The Greek church became less favourable to it than he was, though we cannot tell by what arguments unknown to Eusebius the members of this church were swayed: and the Latin church, which was certainly less able to make new discoveries relative to a book addressed to seven communities in Asia Minor, and after the death of Jerom was not very well qualified for critical inquiries, received the Apocalypse as a work undoubtedly canonical. We must conclude therefore that its reception in the church of Rome was rather the effect of accident, than the result of an impartial and deliberate examination. At that time, the Popes and Councils little imagined that the Apocalypse would one day become a repertory, in which the rebels against their authority would find weapons to attack the church from which they had apostatized, or they would hardly have canonized a work, from which the Pope was to be proved the Antichrist, and Rome the apocalyptical whore.

Though it would be tedious to enumerate all the Latin fathers who received the Apocalypse, I cannot pass over in silence the celebrated names of Jerom and Augustin. Jerom received it<sup>c</sup>, without doubt after a more cautious examination than was instituted by most of his successors: and he appealed in support of its authenticity to ancient testimonies, which certainly existed, and which have been already mentioned in the second section of this chapter. Augustin<sup>d</sup> probably examined the question much less critically than Jerom: yet his authority was so great, not only in the African church, but in the Latin church in general, that his reception of the Apocalypse was what chiefly contributed to its almost universal admission both in Africa, and in the West of Europe. During the life of Augustin, was held in the year 397 the third council of Carthage; and this was the first council, in which the Apocalypse was pronounced

<sup>c</sup> Lardner, Vol. X. p. 77. 100. 123.

<sup>d</sup> Ib. p. 211. 251, 252.

pronounced canonical\*. But this same council, which upon the whole did not display the most acute judgment, placed the following apocryphal books, the Wisdom of Solomon, Ecclesiasticus, Tobit, Judith, and the Maccabees, in the sacred canon: and therefore protestants cannot with propriety appeal to the decrees of this council, not even to that in favour of the Apocalypse. Innocent I. who was elected Pope in the year 402, declared likewise that this book, from which his successors were to be proved the Antichrist, was canonical. Some few persons however, even in the Latin church still doubted of its authority, as appears from the twenty-seventh decree of the fourth council of Toledo which was held in the year 633. In this decree, complaint is made of certain ecclesiastics, who refused to read the Apocalypse in divine service; and they who persist in their refusal are threatened with excommunication. At the same time the Apocalypse is declared to be a genuine and divine work: and the reason assigned for this declaration is, that it had been pronounced such by several councils, and by several Popes. But the good bishops assembled at Toledo would have been reduced to great distress, if they had been required to name the several councils, in which the Apocalypse had been pronounced canonical: for no other is known, than the above-mentioned third council of Carthage. A short time after the fourth council of Toledo, all doubts in respect to the Apocalypse vanished in the Latin church: and it remained unimpeached till the time of the Reformation, when Luther called in question the authority of this book, though it is supposed to prophesy in his favour, and to denounce vengeance against that very church of which he was an enemy. But in his opinion of the Apocalypse Luther had very few followers.

Having related the fate of the Apocalypse in the Greek and Latin churches, I must now mention the reception with which it met in the Syrian church, a church so very extensive that it comprehended not only

all



all the Christians, who resided in Syria, Assyria, and Mesopotamia, but likewise all those, who were dispersed in Arabia, Persia, Tartary, and China.

It has been already noted, that the Apocalypse is not contained in the old Syriac version, which is the Vulgate of the Syrian church in general: and yet, as I have likewise observed, the Manicheans, whose original founder, Scythian, was a native of Arabia, and whose second and proper founder, Manes, spake Syriac, but understood no Greek, consequently could read the Apocalypse only in a Syriac version, appear to have received the Apocalypse. In this case we may conclude, that though the Apocalypse made no part of the Syrian Vulgate, it was translated in an early age into that language. But shall we therefore conclude, that the Syrian church admitted, that St. John the Apostle was the author of it: and if they had been persuaded that he was, would not the Apocalypse have made a part of the Syrian Vulgate, or sacred canon? Hassencamp<sup>e</sup> says in reply, that the Apocalypse was written after the old Syriac version was already made, the former being in his opinion written in the year 96, the latter before that period: and consequently that the Syrian canon omits the Apocalypse, because it was written after that canon was formed. But even if this reply be admitted, we shall render by it no service to the Apocalypse: for on the hypothesis, that the Apocalypse was written so late as the year 96, very material objections may be made to its divinity, as will be shewn in the section relative to the time when this book was written.

Ephrem, the Syrian, has not only quoted the Apocalypse, but has quoted it as a divine work, of which the following passage in his Syriac works<sup>f</sup> is a proof. ‘John saw in revelation a great and wonderful book, which God had written, and which was sealed with seven seals.’ Other passages of a like import, especially some from those works of Ephrem, which exist in a  
Greek

<sup>e</sup> In his Remarks on the latter part of my Introduction, p. 24. 26.

<sup>f</sup> Vol. II. p. 332.

Greek translation, are collected by Hassencamp in the above-mentioned treatise. From the opinion of Ephrem we may argue to that of the Syrian church in general in his time, and conclude that the Apocalypse, of which a Syriac translation must already have been made, was not only known to the members of that church, but received by them as a divine work.

In the seventh century a new and very literal Syriac translation was made of the Apocalypse, and taken into the Philoxenian version, which was chiefly used by the Monophysites. Of this version I have treated at large in the second volume of this Introduction<sup>g</sup>: and therefore I shall only observe at present, that as this version was used by the Monophysites, they did not reject the Apocalypse.

In the latter half of the same century, and in the beginning of the next, lived Jacob, the Monophysite bishop of Edeffa<sup>h</sup>. He has quoted the Apocalypse in his commentary on Genesis, at ch. xlix. 17. The passage is in the first volume of <sup>i</sup> Ephrem's Syriac works, where is a *Catena* on Genesis, formed of the commentaries of Ephrem and Jacob. The text of the Apocalypse, which Jacob quotes, I have already collated with the text of the Philoxenian version<sup>k</sup>. In the second edition of this Introduction I observed that Jacob ascribed the Apocalypse to 'one of the saints,' because the words, which he has used, were 'this is the kingdom, of which one of the saints has spoken in a revelation from God:' and I declared that I was in doubt, whether he meant St. John the Apostle, or whether he entertained the same sentiments, as Dionysius of Alexandria<sup>l</sup>. Hassencamp however contends that he really meant St. John the Apostle,

<sup>g</sup> Ch. vii. Sect. 10.

<sup>h</sup> It appears from *Assemani Bibl. Orient. Tom. II. p. 337*, that he died in the year 1019 of the Greek era, that is, in the year of Christ 708.

<sup>i</sup> Pag. 192.

<sup>k</sup> See Sect. 2. of this Chapter.

<sup>l</sup> Ch. vii. Sect. 10.

Apostle, because presently after, Jacob adds, ‘that this relates to the Roman Empire, as the Holy Ghost has taught by the bishop and martyr Hippolytus, where he explains the Revelation made to John, who speaks the word of God.’ But this argument is in my opinion by no means satisfactory: for the expression ‘John who speaks the words of God’ denotes nothing more than Johannes theologus, as Assëman has rightly translated it. But whether Johannes theologus was the same person as Johannes apostolus, is a question on which the ancients were divided: and they who received the Apocalypse as a sacred book, but denied that St. John the Apostle was the author of it, carefully observed this distinction. Besides, if Jacob had really meant St. John the Apostle, he would hardly have called him, as in the first of the preceding quotations, by so indeterminate a title, as that of ‘one of the saints.’

That the Syrians of the Nestorian party received likewise the Apocalypse in the eighth century, appears from an ancient monument, which was dug up at Sanxuen in the Chinese province of Xensi in the year 1625. This monument has two inscriptions, the one in Chinese characters, the other in Syriac, from which it appears that it was erected in the year of the Greeks 1092, that is, in the year of Christ 781: at which period, as well as some centuries later, was a very numerous colony of Nestorian Syrians in China, who regularly received their bishops from the Nestorian Patriarch. And on this monument mention is made of the New Testament as containing twenty-seven books: consequently the Apocalypse must have been included in the number. It was formerly suspected to have been a forgery of the Jesuits; but Hassencamp has in my opinion satisfactorily shown that the monument is really ancient and genuine<sup>m</sup>.

Dionysius

<sup>m</sup> See § 7, of his remarks, where the history of this remarkable monument is related, and so much of its inscription quoted as is necessary for the present.

Dionysius Barsalibæus, a celebrated Monophysite bishop of Amida at the end of the eleventh century, wrote an Exposition of the *Apocalypse*, as Hassencamp has shown from Pococke's preface to his edition of the Syriac version of the second Epistle of St. Peter, the second and third Epistles of St. John, and the Epistle of St. Jude. And this is further confirmed by Asselman, *Bibl. Orient. Tom. II. p. 210.*

On the other hand, Gregorius Barhebræus, or, as he is likewise called Abulpharagius, who was Primate of all the Monophysites of the East in the thirteenth century<sup>n</sup>, and was by far the most learned of all the Syrian writers, appears, as Asselman<sup>o</sup> has observed, to have rejected the *Apocalypse*: for where he speaks of it in his *Nomocanon*, he does nothing more than quote the opinion of Dionysius of Alexandria, and in the following words: 'The *Apocalypse*, which bears the name of the Apostle John, is not his work, but the work either of Cerinthus, who taught that there would be eating and drinking upon earth after the resurrection, or of another John; for two persons of the name of John lie buried in Ephesus.' The Monophysites or Jacobites therefore did not receive the *Apocalypse* unanimously<sup>p</sup>.

Ebedjesu, Metropolitan of Armenia, who died in the year<sup>q</sup> 1318, has in his catalogue of the sacred books, which compose the New Testament, entirely omitted the *Apocalypse*<sup>r</sup>, though he afterwards takes notice of the work, which Hippolytus had written in its defence. Asselman relates also, that neither the Jacobites nor the Nestorians read the *Apocalypse* in their churches, and that

<sup>n</sup> He died in the year 1286.

<sup>o</sup> *Bibl. Orient. Tom. III. P. I. p. 15. not. 5.*

<sup>p</sup> Hassencamp replies, p. 17, that the passage quoted from Dionysius is ambiguous, and that Dionysius may possibly mean some *Apocalypse* different from that which is in our canon. Whether he does, or does not, I leave the reader to determine.

<sup>q</sup> Assemani *Bibl. Orient. Tom. III. P. I. p. 3. not. 3.*

<sup>r</sup> *Ib. p. 12.*



that it is not contained in their manuscripts of the New Testament. He adds, however, that this is no certain proof that the Nestorians wholly rejected the Apocalypse, since it may arise merely from the circumstance, that it is not contained in the Syrian Vulgate. Of the Maronite Syrians it is unnecessary to mention that they receive the Apocalypse: for as they acknowledge the supremacy of the Pope, they of course can reject no book which has been canonized by the church of Rome. The Egyptian Christians likewise receive the Apocalypse.

I now come to the opinion of the Lutheran church, which, though it is much too modern, to be of any weight in determining the main question, is in other respects of importance to those who are members of the church. Luther, though accustomed from his childhood to consider the Apocalypse, as one of the canonical books of the New Testament, rejected it in positive terms in the preface<sup>s</sup> to his edition of 1522. This preface Luther afterwards omitted, and in the later editions substituted a preface<sup>t</sup>, in which he expressed himself in less decisive terms, and left it to others, who, he says, were better qualified than himself, to determine whether it merited a place in the sacred canon, or not. It does not appear that Luther discovered new arguments in favour of the Apocalypse after he had written the first preface; at least a comparison of the two prefaces affords no reason to think so. He was probably influenced by the same motives as those which were avowed by Dionysius of Alexandria<sup>u</sup>: and, as the Apocalypse was highly esteemed by the generality of his brethren, who, like himself had renounced the church of Rome, he would not absolutely reject it, but substituted a dubious for a more decisive tone, that he might give the less offence  
to

<sup>s</sup> An extract from this preface has been already given in the first section of this chapter.

<sup>t</sup> An extract from this preface likewise has been given in the same section.

<sup>u</sup> Sect. 2 of this chapter.

to the rest of his party. Who the persons were, on whose account in particular Luther altered his preface, I do not know: and I wish that the records of our reformation were more closely examined with a view to this subject. In general however we may assert as an indisputable fact, that almost all the profelytes to Luther's doctrine had been accustomed from their childhood to consider the Apocalypse as a prophetical book, and that the Franciscans in particular, many of whom embraced Lutheranism, had begun so early as the thirteenth century to teach the doctrine, that the enemy of the saints, foretold in the Apocalypse, was the Pope.

But, whatever alterations Luther thought proper to make in his original preface, he deviated only so far from it, that he left the matter in doubt: nor do I know of any passage in any of his works, in which he has given it as his opinion, that the Apocalypse was canonical. Our Symbolic books likewise leave the question undecided. It is true, that at the beginning of the Formula Concordiæ, 'the prophetical and apostolical writings of the Old and New Testament' are commanded to be believed, and to be received as the only rule of faith: but since it is a matter of doubt, whether the Apocalypse was written by an Apostle or not, and this very doubt is expressed in the preface prefixed to it in our Lutheran Bibles, it is evident that the Formula Concordiæ enjoins no rule in regard to its reception. Should any one object that the authors of the Formula Concordiæ meant by the term 'apostolical writings,' such writings as the ancient councils had declared canonical, I would answer that even in that case the term does not necessarily include the Apocalypse, because the ancient councils were not unanimous in respect to its canonical authority. The council of Laodicea itself may be here alleged as an instance: for, though the sixtieth canon of this council has lately been called in question, yet at that time when the Formula Concordiæ was drawn up, no one had the least doubt of its authenticity. Further, the Apocalypse is not once quoted in the Formula Concordiæ, as every  
one

one will find on consulting the index annexed to it in Rechenberg's edition. When therefore the greater part of the Lutheran divines refer the Apocalypse, without doubt or scruple, to the class of canonical writings of the New Testament, this is the result only of private opinion, and not of any decision made by the church. For the Lutheran church, as a law-giving body, has enacted no decree, which enjoins a belief in the Apocalypse: and therefore, if any of its members should doubt, or even deny the authenticity of the Apocalypse, it would be highly unjust to accuse them of heterodoxy. On the contrary, if it were allowable to argue from inferences, which may be drawn from the Symbolic books, the authority of the Apocalypse would be rather diminished than increased: for in the Symbolic books the doctrine of the Millennium is expressly condemned, and yet the Apocalypse, if we explain it literally, certainly contains this doctrine. But as it would be unfair to argue either on the one side or on the other, where nothing is expressly determined, we must rest satisfied that our Symbolic books, like Luther's last preface, leave the decision of the question to every man's private judgment.

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## S E C T. V.

*Of the completion or non-completion of the prophecies contained in the Apocalypse, considered in respect to the arguments which they afford in favour of, or against its divinity.*

**T**HOUGH the testimonies of the ancients must decide the question, whether a book ascribed to any particular person, was really written by that person or not, yet when a book lays claim to prophecy, and the



question is agitated, not whether this or that Apostle wrote it, but in general whether it was inspired by the Deity, there is another method of coming to a decision, which we in the eighteenth century may apply, but which was not applicable in the earliest ages of Christianity. We have only to inquire, whether the prophecies contained in it have been fulfilled. If they have not been fulfilled, we must consider the work as a mere production of the human imagination: but on the other hand, if it be certain that they have been fulfilled, we have an infallible criterion, from which we may at once, and without any further critical inquiries, pronounce in favour of its divinity.

Here however an almost insuperable difficulty presents itself at the very outset, and that is, the difficulty of determining what the prophecies in the Apocalypse really mean: for that which by one commentator is considered as fulfilled, and is accordingly quoted as a proof that the Apocalypse is divine, has according to another commentator not yet received its completion. For instance, Vitringa contends that certain prophecies are completed, which Lange absolutely denies: and Bengel again differs from both. Nor is this the case with these three only; for among one hundred commentators hardly any one is satisfied with the explanations of his predecessors. Each man imagines that he alone has discovered the true meaning, which had escaped the penetration of those who had gone before him: and after having read the various commentaries, which have been written on the Apocalypse, one is almost inclined to believe that each commentator is so far in the right, when he says that all others are in the wrong. I remember soon after the foundation of the University of Göttingen, that Heumann and Oporin read lectures there at the same time on the Apocalypse. Oporin, a man of great modesty and diffidence, spoke of Heumann's learning and general good sense in terms of the highest approbation: but always made an exception to the lectures on the Apocalypse, saying, 'that is Heumann's weak side.' Heumann, on  
the



the other hand, in many respects did justice to Oporin : but when he came to speak of the Apocalypse, he lamented that Oporin should attempt to read lectures on a book, of which he did not comprehend the meaning. About the same time, in the University of Halle, Dr. Lange, a friend of Heumann, had again a very different system, of the truth of which he was so persuaded, that he used to assure his pupils, he was the first commentator who had delivered the Apocalypse from the torture. It is unnecessary to mention more names : for every man may easily convince himself merely by consulting the different commentaries, that the commentators in general are at variance<sup>w</sup>. In fact he have no connected and unforced commentary on the Apocalypse, in which the agreement between historical events and the predictions of the Apocalypse have been clearly and distinctly explained. Even the immortal Newton, the greatest genius of modern ages, who with powers almost divine discovered the eternal laws which the Almighty had prescribed to his creation, has afforded in his attempt on the Apocalypse, in which he was not more successful than his predecessors, a mortifying proof of the weakness of human nature.

If it be objected, that the prophecies in the Apocalypse are not yet fulfilled, that they are therefore not fully understood, and that hence arises the difference of opinion in respect to their meaning, I answer, that if these prophecies are not yet fulfilled, it is wholly impossible that the Apocalypse should be a divine work, since the author expressly declares, ch. i. 1, that it contains ‘ things, which must *shortly* come to pass.’ Consequently, either a great part of them, I will not say all, must have been fulfilled, or the author’s declaration, that they should *shortly*

<sup>w</sup> I mean original commentators, or those who have acted for themselves, and cannot be supposed to include all those who implicitly adopt the systems delivered in schools, in which they have been educated. That the clergyman in the Dutchy of Würtemberg, for instance, who maintained that the angel flying in the midst of heaven, Apoc. xiv. denoted Bengel, adopted Bengel’s system, is a thing of course.

shortly be completed is not consistent with matter of fact. It is true, that to the Almighty a thousand years are as one day, and one day as a thousand years : but if we therefore explain the term ‘shortly’ as denoting a period longer than that which has elapsed since the time when the Apocalypse was written, we sacrifice the love of truth to the support of a preconceived opinion. For when the Deity condescends to communicate information to mankind, he will of course use such language as is intelligible to mankind, and not name a period short, which all men consider as long ; or the communication will be totally useless. Besides, in reference to God’s eternity, not only seventeen hundred, but seventeen thousand years are nothing. But the author of the Apocalypse himself has wholly precluded any such evasion by explaining, ch. i. 3, what he meant by the term ‘shortly :’ for he there says, ‘Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophesy, and keep those things which are written therein, for the time is at hand.’ According therefore to the author’s own declaration, the Apocalypse contained prophecies, with which the very persons to whom it was sent were immediately concerned. But if none of these prophecies were designed to be completed till long after their death, those persons were not immediately concerned with them ; and the author would surely not have said, that they were blessed in reading prophecies, of which the time was at hand, if those prophecies were not to be fulfilled till after a lapse of many ages.

## SECT. VI.

*Whether the contradictory explanations, which have been hitherto given of the Apocalypse, ought to be ascribed to the Apocalypse itself, or to a want of knowledge in the commentators.*

WHEN a work which lays claim to prophecy, and of which the author declares, that the prophecies contained in it will shortly begin to be completed, still remains after a lapse of seventeen centuries so difficult to be understood, that commentators cannot agree as to its meaning, it is difficult to avoid suspecting, that the claim of such a book is ungrounded: and I confess that these very contradictions in the explanation of it are still more unfavourable to it, than the ancient testimonies before the time of Eusebius. On the other hand it must be admitted, that, even when it is certain that a work contains divine prophecies, our own ignorance may be such that we are unable to explain them. For instance, the prophecies of Isaiah and Jeremiah relating to Edom, Moab, and Ammon, we are unable to explain from real history: but this circumstance excites no suspicion against their divinity, because the history of the Edomites, the Moabites, and the Ammonites, for several centuries, is totally unknown to us. And that the commentators on the Apocalypse, even the most learned of them, have been deficient in qualifications, which every commentator on this book ought to possess, must likewise be granted.

In the first place every man, who attempts to comment on a work, must be complete master of the language in which it is written. Now the Apocalypse, though written in Greek, is at the same time full of Hebraisms\*: its

\* No book in the whole New Testament has so many Hebraisms as the Apocalypse.

its language is figurative, and the figures have reference to Jewish customs: and the whole work has manifestly the form and manner of an oriental composition. Consequently an interpreter of the Apocalypse must, with a knowledge of the Greek, unite a knowledge both of the oriental languages and of oriental antiquities: for mere Hebrew philology, or such as is derived only from the study of the Hebrew Bible, and the use of a Hebrew Lexicon, is insufficient. But the commentators on the Apocalypse, especially those who have taken the lead, and have set the fashion to others, have for the most part been very deficient in this necessary qualification, and moreover have been biassed with prejudices, which are not well adapted to a discovery of the truth. Thus the Franciscans in the middle ages explained many passages of the Apocalypse as denouncing vengeance to the Pope, because they were proscribed by Papal authority: the Lutherans discovered in it prophecies against the church, from which they had withdrawn: and in the last century the reformers in France irritated by the revocation of the edict of Nantes found the means of consolation in the Apocalypse, by explaining it to the disadvantage of their persecutors. Hence have arisen commentaries, in which others have implicitly confided. But to return to the necessary philological qualifications in an interpreter of the Apocalypse, which, it is certain, have fallen to the lot of very few. The late Dr. Lange for instance, though a very zealous commentator on the Apocalypse, was possessed of very little knowledge of the oriental languages: and Bengel, though upon the whole a very accurate and very respectable critic, had never made oriental philology his particular study. An exception may perhaps be made in favour of Vitringa: but even Vitringa did not possess oriental philology in its full extent, for he was unacquainted with Arabic, without which it is impossible to be complete master of the Hebrew. Yet his merits are very great: and, if he had not been a disciple of Cocceius, might not have known more of the Apocalypse than most other interpreters. Lately, however, Wetstein and

Harenberg



Harenberg have applied a very considerable fund of Jewish literature to the explanation of the Apocalypse: the former in his edition of the Greek Testament, the latter still more amply in his Exposition of the Revelation of St. John, published at Brunswick in 1759, a work, in which the quoted passages, and the translations given of those passages, betray however a few instances of partiality for the author's system. But Wetstein and Harenberg have not set the fashion to others: on the contrary, the latter, if I am not mistaken, is very little read. As to most other commentators and translators of the Apocalypse, it must be confessed that they have been frequently guilty of almost inconceivable absurdities: nor do I except even those, who, setting aside all prophetic explanations, have confined themselves to literal and grammatical interpretation. But whoever fails in the grammatical interpretation of a book will hardly succeed in discovering the author's meaning<sup>r</sup>.

A second qualification, which an interpreter of the Apocalypse ought to possess, is a taste for poetry and painting; for in the Apocalypse, notwithstanding its uncouth Greek, we meet with very fine description. But when a vision is well represented, the rules of poetry and painting are usually observed, and consequently some knowledge of these arts is requisite, in order to understand the representation. Thus, if a painter designed to represent a dream, occasioned by the particular interposition of Divine Providence, he would paint an angel standing by the bed of the person who had the dream: and this he might do, without intending to signify, as  
a dog-

<sup>r</sup> To mention only one instance of false translation. Each of the twelve gates of the New Jerusalem consisted (according to the common translation) of one pearl. Now a pearl, whether we consider the rotundity of its figure, or the softness of its mass, is very ill qualified to become the gate of a city, even if that city exists only in poetical description. The word used in the Greek is *μαργαρίτης*, and this ought to be rendered 'precious stone,' for this is the meaning ascribed to the word in Chaldee, in which language it was adopted and written *מרגליתא*. A gate built of precious stones presents an image both of strength, and of magnificence. *Μαργαρίτης* is used perhaps in the same sense, Matth. xiii. 45, 46.

a dogmatical truth, that an angel in a bodily shape really descended to that person, and inspired the dream. In like manner the angels, which act so considerable a part in the Apocalypse, may be considered as poetical imagery, unless we suppose that its author intended to convert into articles of faith the fabulous notion of the Jews, that every land and every element had its peculiar angel. This is only one instance out of many, which might be alleged. But among the commentators on the Apocalypse, where shall we find one, who had a proper taste for the explanation of poetical representation? It is true, that Petersen possessed a poetical genius; but then he was a poet who did not understand the rules of the art, and interpreted the Apocalypse much more literally than he himself ever wrote. When an ancient poet says,

‘ Euphrates ibat jam mollior undis,’

or a modern poet,

‘ At thy approach the Rhine withdrew it’s waves,  
‘ And left its bed, to let the conqu’ror pass,’

no one would take this passage in a strict and literal sense: but Petersen always understood Apoc. xvi. 12. as signifying that the waters of the Euphrates were really and literally dried up. The first time I heard of this literal explanation was, when I was a boy at Halle, and happened to be one day in company with Petersen: but even at that time, though I had no very clear and distinct notions on the subject, the drying up of the Euphrates, that the kings of the East might pass it, appeared to me at least an unnecessary miracle.

The third and most important requisite is a complete knowledge of history, especially the history of Asia. A general knowledge of history is by no means sufficient; it must be a knowledge which descends to the most minute particulars; for a prophesy, in which neither person nor place is named, we can understand only by knowing the distinguishing circumstances of those events to which it relates. Great events, such as battles, po-  
litical

litical revolutions, religious persecutions, when examined only at large, are for the most part so similar to each other, that, without names and dates, it is difficult to distinguish them. At least there is hardly any great event, to which there is not something in history which bears resemblance, and with which, therefore, it might possibly be confounded, when all distinctions of geography and chronology are set aside, unless we know the more minute circumstances, which distinguish the one from the other. Two battles fought by the French, the one in 1513, the other in 1757, have a great resemblance to each other, though in importance they were very unlike. Suppose, then, that these two battles were represented in painting, and that some ages hence, when the present military dress, modern tactics, and plans of attack, which to us would easily distinguish the one engagement from the other, the two paintings should be put into the hands of a person unacquainted with these particulars, he would be at a loss to determine which of the two paintings represented the one, and which the other engagement. And every one who has visited galleries of historical paintings, knows how difficult it is, without a very particular knowledge of history, to pass through the gallery, without being at a loss in discovering the meaning of the subjects.

But the commentators on the Apocalypse are so far from having possessed a complete knowledge of history, that the greatest part of them have displayed only a moderate share of it. Vitranga, perhaps, will here likewise be mentioned as an exception; but among the commentators on the Apocalypse we can reckon only one Vitranga, and even Vitranga's historical knowledge was not sufficiently extensive. The ancient history before the birth of Christ is foreign to our present purpose; and the history of the seventeen last centuries was understood by Vitranga, in its full extent, only so far as it relates to Europe. But we cannot expect that prophecies, addressed to seven communities in Asia Minor, should be fulfilled only in Europe, or in the Latin church.



church. Christianity flourished under the Eastern, as well as under the Western Emperors : it was propagated likewise in Arabia, in Persia, in the great Tartary from the Caspian Sea to the borders of China, and even in China itself. Asia has been the seat of the most important revolutions with which the history of Christianity is closely connected. In Asia was founded the religion of Mohammed ; and out of Asia emerged the Saracens, the Turks, and the Tartars. Whoever, therefore, is not acquainted with the Constantinopolitan and Asiatic histories of these nations, is by no means qualified to become an interpreter of the Apocalypse. But among all who have ventured to interpret it, not one can boast of this thorough acquaintance ; and the principal reason is, that the best accounts of the Saracens, the Turks, and the Tartars, are contained in Syriac and Arabic authors, which very few historians can read in the original, and of which we have either no translations at all, or not such as an historian can appeal to as to an original document<sup>2</sup>.

Further, as most men are acquainted with the history of their own country, and this history always appears of so much the more importance, in proportion as we know the less of the history of other countries, the interpreters of the Apocalypse have sought at home for the completion of its prophecies : and as prophetic descriptions, without either names or dates, are applicable to various events, each interpreter has found, in a great part of the Apocalypse, the history of his own country. And when we consider that the passion for this mode of interpretation has been variously modified, sometimes by religious zeal and a spirit of persecution, at other times by

<sup>2</sup> It must be admitted, however, that even they who were better acquainted with the Constantinopolitan and Arabic histories than we are, did not meet with better success. For Barhebræus, the most celebrated historian of the East, who lived in the reign of the great Tartarian conqueror Hulac, and was himself a witness of very important revolutions, doubted the divinity of the Apocalypse. Consequently he did not perceive any correspondence between the prophecies of the Apocalypse and the Asiatic history.



by a sense of oppression and enmity to the ruling church, we need not wonder that the commentaries on the Apocalypse have assumed such various shapes, that what is affirmed as indisputably true in the one, is as flatly contradicted in the other.

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## S E C T. VII.

### *Further remarks on the different Expositions of the Apocalypse.*

THE compass of the present work does not permit me to examine in detail the various expositions, which have been given of the Apocalypse: but this I will affirm in general terms, that of all the commentaries on it, which I have hitherto seen, not one has given me satisfaction. I confess likewise, that out of all the commentaries put together, I am unable to make one which is better.

Thus much, however, I perceive, that if the Apocalypse is a divine book, the beginning of its prophecies *must* relate to the destruction of Jerusalem: and that it *may* relate to that event, provided the work was written before the Jewish war. In this case the sixth chapter may be explained as a prophecy, both of the kingdom of the Messiah (ver. 2.), and of the destruction of Jerusalem itself: but then the second, third, and fourth seals cannot denote events, which followed each other, but events which happened at the same time, each of which is separately represented, in order to make out the mystical number seven. The seventh seal may relate to the deliverance of the faithful among the Jews, who fled to Pella: and ch. viii. 1, may denote the consequent security which the church enjoyed in that city. On the

the other hand, if the sixth and seventh chapters be supposed to refer to later events, the first readers of the Apocalypse, to whom the work was immediately sent, must have been so very little interested in them, that the author could hardly have said, ch. i. 3, ‘Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophesy, and keep those things which are written therein : for the time is at hand.’

What follows from ch. viii. 2, to ch. ix. 12, is to me so obscure, that I cannot even hazard a conjecture : but ch. ix. 13—17, contains a description which may be very well applied to the irruption of the Saracens, the Turks, and the Tartars, and to those ages, in which one horde of barbarians after another emerged from the East, and with irresistible fury over-ran the West. I think it likewise not improbable, that the most ancient explanation of the mystical number 666 is the true one, according to which the word ΛΑΤΕΙΝΟΣ is denoted ; the Greek letters in this name, when taken as numerals, making out precisely the number in question. Nor will I assert that protestant commentators are mistaken, in explaining the ‘whore drunken with the blood of the martyrs,’ not of heathen Rome, which was converted, and became not a heap of ruins according to the description given in ch. xviii, but of the church of Rome, the capital of which may one day, perhaps, meet with this fate. At the same time, however, I must confess, that in all the chapters which relate to the beast and the whore, I can discover no marks, which indicate that the beast and the whore are to be sought in the church : on the contrary, if we may judge from the description given of them in the Apocalypse, one should suppose that they related to an heathen city and empire.

But if it be admitted that certain chapters of the Apocalypse are capable of the most satisfactory explanation, there are other intermediate chapters, which are so obscure, that to me, at least, the chain of prophecy is broken. It is not sufficient, that we discover a resemblance between a few detached passages and some single  
historical

historical events: for any prophecy, however false upon the whole, (take that of Drabicius for instance) may have something in it, which has the appearance of being fulfilled. Besides, the fourteenth chapter itself affords a strong argument, that the explanation above given of the seventh chapter is inaccurate. For the hundred and forty-four thousand, mentioned in the fourteenth chapter as having the Father's name written on their foreheads, appear to be the very same as the hundred and forty-four thousand, who are described as sealed in the seventh chapter: and we have no reason to conclude, from the fourteenth chapter, that they were persons whose justification was completed, and who were become inhabitants of heaven. But the Jews, who fled to Pella, did not live so late as the time to which I should be obliged to refer the fourteenth chapter: nor did their posterity so long continue to be a separate community.

Further, if the sixth and seventh chapters of the Apocalypse really relate to the destruction of Jerusalem, it will be found, on examination,

1. That they contain nothing which had not been already foretold by Christ and the prophet Daniel. Consequently, though it were true that the Apocalypse was written before the commencement of the Jewish war, the completion of this prophecy would afford no argument that the Apocalypse was written by inspiration, because the author of it might have derived his information from preceding prophecies. Thus, if any man in the present age should foretel the conversion of the Jews, the completion of that prophecy would not prove that he was a real prophet, since he might have taken it from the Epistles of St. Paul.

2. That, though the description in the Apocalypse is much more pompous, it is not so circumstantial as those of Christ and Daniel. It takes no notice of the attack of Cestius Gallus, to which Christ, with a warning voice to his faithful disciples, very clearly alludes: it contains nothing about Titus Vespasian, who is characterized by



Daniel, and nothing of the circumstances likewise foretold by Daniel, that the war would last seven years, and that in the midst of this period the sacrifices would cease. Now in a revelation made by Christ himself, a short time only before the destruction of Jerusalem, one might reasonably expect that the description of this event would contain more circumstances than the prophecy which he had formerly delivered: but since this is not the case with the prophecy in the Apocalypse, one cannot avoid doubting whether it really did proceed from Christ.

3. That, in order to make out the mystical number seven, events, which happened nearly at the same time, are divided into the second, third, and fourth seals. Now this seems wholly unnecessary for a writer who was acquainted with the circumstances of the Jewish war, whether his information was prophetic, or only historical. And an author, who was determined to adhere to the number seven, might very properly have sought it in the seven years prophesied by Daniel. The history of the war itself likewise furnishes seven remarkable dates, which are well adapted to the purpose.—

1. The offering of birds at the entrance into a synagogue at Cæsarea, made in order to irritate the Jews, an event, which, though trifling in itself, afforded an occasion for the breaking out of the Jewish war. 2. The seizure of the principal fortress Masada by the banditti. 3. The campaign of Cestius Gallus. 4. The irruption of the greater army under Vespasian. 5. The siege and conquest of Jerusalem, with the famine<sup>a</sup> which preceded its surrender. 6. The retaking of Masada, or rather the

<sup>a</sup> Ch. vi. 6, can have no reference to the famine in Jerusalem: for when a chœnix of wheat cost a denarius, it may be said that wheat was dear, but not that there was a famine. A chœnix contained as much wheat as was necessary for the support of one day, and a common labourer could earn a denarius every day: the account, therefore, contained in this verse, may be applied to the scarcity which happened in the reign of Claudius (Joseph. Antiq. xx. 2. 6. Acts xi. 28, 29. Matth. xxiv. 7), but it is wholly inapplicable to the dreadful famine, which preceded the surrender of Jerusalem. It was said likewise, in ch. vi. 6, that the oil and the wine should not be hurt: but this was hardly the case, when Jerusalem was reduced to the utmost distress.



the self-murder of the whole Jewish garrison contained in it, which Josephus considers as the close of the war. 7. The last remains of the war in Egypt and Libya. But of these events, what is very extraordinary, no use is made in the Apocalypse.

## S E C T. VIII.

*The same subject continued.*

**I**T would really be worth while to write a particular history of the expositions of the Apocalypse, and to shew in what manner the most ancient interpretation of it was gradually forsaken, in what manner the modern interpretation of it took its rise among Protestants, and how this interpretation has spread into so many different branches. But as this would be an undertaking too extensive for the present work, I will briefly observe, that the various expositions of the Apocalypse may be arranged under the following classes.

1. To the first class may be referred all those commentaries, which are fashionable among protestants, and according to which the Apocalypse contains prophecies against the Pope and the church of Rome. In the commentaries belonging to this class, the prophecies in the Apocalypse are considered as still fulfilling.

They have found, however, two powerful adversaries in Webster and Harenberg, whose objections, especially those of the latter, merit consideration. It is true, that not all Webster's arguments on this subject are satisfactory: for instance, that in which he says, that the Franciscans, persecuted by papal authority, were the first persons who discovered in the Apocalypse prophecies against the Pope; but that it is very improbable, that

ignorant monks of the middle ages should have been the first to find the true key to so difficult a book. I grant, that as the monks of the middle ages had little or no knowledge of history, they could not have explained prophecies which were fulfilled long before their time: but if a prophecy was completed in their own time, they might have understood it better than the most learned men of former ages. The very pressure under which the Franciscans, and other dissatisfied members of the church, at that time laboured, added to the corruption of the church, must have rendered such a prophecy more intelligible to them, than it could have been to the most enlightened commentators before it was fulfilled. Another of Webster's objections is, that whoever follows the Franciscans, in interpreting the beast of the Pope, ought, in order to be consistent, to follow them also in believing that the *fratres spirituales* formed the only true church. Now this objection is unreasonable; for it is surely allowable to adopt one part of an interpretation, and reject the other.

But a very material objection to the commentaries of this class may be founded on the third part of the first chapter. The greatest part of the prophecies in the *Apocalypse* relate to the sufferings of the church and the punishment of its adversaries: and in the twentieth chapter is described the happy kingdom of a thousand years, which was to put an end to all former sorrows. When, therefore, the prophet says, at the beginning of his work, 'Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein, for the time is at hand,' every man would suppose, unless he were already biased by commentators, that some at least of those readers to whom the book was delivered and recommended, would live to see the happy period of the prophecy or the millennium. For how can a reader be called blessed, who sees nothing but the persecution of the faithful, and the downfall of states? Yet, on a comparison of the twentieth with the preceding chapters, it appears  
evident

evident that the destruction of Babylon, and of the beast, was to take place before the commencement of the millennium.

2. To the second class belong those commentaries, which confine the prophecies of the Apocalypse to the three first centuries, at least such as relate to persecution and punishment; for the happy Millennium may, according to these commentaries, be made to commence with the conversion of Constantine the Great.

The objection grounded on ch. i. 3, and on the Millennium, may be made likewise to the commentaries of this class.

3. A third class of commentators find in the Apocalypse nothing but the destruction of Jerusalem, and the flight of the Christians from that city to Pella before the commencement of the siege. This interpretation has been supported by Harenberg, in his Exposition of the Apocalypse, published in 1759: and, in order to avoid the objection, that a prophecy relating only to Jerusalem was not a proper work to be dedicated to seven churches in Asia Minor, he contends that the seven churches mentioned in the Apocalypse denoted seven synagogues in Jerusalem, which were called the synagogue of Ephesus, the synagogue of Smyrna, of Laodicea, &c. because they were respectively built by the inhabitants of those cities, who frequented Jerusalem. Now as, according to this interpretation, the prophecies were fulfilled in a short time, agreeably to ch. i. 3, I should be disposed to adopt it, if difficulties of another kind did not present themselves as obstacles to its reception. To mention only one: 'That great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth,' mentioned ch. xvii. 18, can hardly denote Jerusalem; for it clearly characterizes Rome, and is, as it were, the name of that great capital.

Lastly, if the Apocalypse were explained without previously supposing that it was a divine work, an interpretation might be made of a totally different turn from any of the preceding. In this case, as it is not taken

for granted, that the Apocalypse contains prophecies which have been really fulfilled, we should have to inquire, not what events in history had resemblance to visions in the Apocalypse, but merely what the author of this work proposed to himself in the description of the visions, what events he himself supposed would happen, and what expectations the readers of this work, in the age when it was written, probably formed from it. But this is an inquiry which I have never instituted, and therefore I cannot say what would be the result.

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## S E C T. IX.

### *Of the time when the Apocalypse was written.*

FROM what has been already said in the sixth section of this chapter, it appears that the question, at what time the Apocalypse was written, very materially concerns the question, whether it be a divine work. For if its first prophecies relate to the destruction of Jerusalem, it must have been written before the Jewish war: but if the author of it wrote after the Jewish war, and, as is commonly supposed, in the reign of Domitian, the sixth chapter of the Apocalypse cannot possibly predict the destruction of Jerusalem, and in this case I do not see how we can vindicate the assurance given in ch. i. 3, 'the time is at hand,' and, ch. xxii. 20, 'he that testifieth these things, saith, Surely I come quickly, Amen.' If the Apocalypse was written before the destruction of Jerusalem, this coming of Christ may be understood of his coming to judge Jerusalem, to which the expression, 'till I come,' used in St. John's Gospel, ch. xxi. 22, likewise refers. On the other hand, if the Apocalypse was written in the reign of Domitian,



mitian, the coming of Christ admits of no other explanation than his coming to judge the world, or at least to put an end to the reign of the beast, and to establish his thousand years kingdom. But in the course of seventeen hundred years, neither of these events has taken place: and to assert that the term ‘quickly’ is consistent with so long a duration, because seventeen centuries are nothing in comparison of God’s eternity, is a mere subterfuge, in which the love of truth is sacrificed to the support of a pre-assumed opinion.

As Lardner has already given a very full and very excellent examination of the question, when the Apocalypse was written <sup>b</sup>, it is the less necessary for me to be diffuse on this subject: and on two points I may refer the reader entirely to Lardner, namely, the examination of the sentiments of those ancient writers, who on the authority of Irenæus assert, that the Apocalypse was written in the reign of Domitian, and the investigation of Newton’s hypothesis, which refers it to a much earlier period. Knittel likewise in his ‘*Criticisms on the Revelation of St. John*,’ has admirably written on this subject, and has introduced much new matter, which is of importance in estimating the various opinions, which have been maintained in respect to the time when the Apocalypse was written.

Six different opinions have been advanced. 1. It has been asserted, that the Apocalypse was written in the reign of the Emperor Claudius. 2. Others refer it to the reign of Nero. 3. Others leave it undetermined whether it was written under Claudius or Nero, but contend, that it was written before the reign of Domitian, and before the Jewish war. 4. According to the usual opinion, it was written in the reign of Domitian. 5. It has been referred to the reign of Trajan. 6. To that of Hadrian.

1. The opinion, that the Apocalypse was written in the reign of Claudius, has no other testimony in its favour than

<sup>b</sup> Vol. ix. § 5.

than that of Epiphanius<sup>c</sup>, who in his fifty first heresy uses the expression ‘after his (St. John’s) return from Patmos under the Emperor Claudius,’ and presently after says, ‘when St. John prophesied in the days of the Emperor Claudius, while he was in the island of Patmos.’

To this single testimony of a writer, who lived three hundred years later than St. John, two very material objections have been made. In the first place, no traces are to be discovered of any persecution of the Christians in the reign of Claudius: for though he commanded the Jews to quit Rome, yet this command did not affect the Jews who lived out of Italy, and still less the Christians. Consequently the banishment of St. John to the island of Patmos, can hardly be referred to the reign of Claudius. Secondly, that the seven flourishing Christian communities at Ephesus, Smyrna, &c. to which the Apocalypse is addressed, existed so early as the reign of Claudius, is an opinion not easy to be reconciled with the history which is given in the Acts of the Apostles, of the first planting of Christianity in Asia Minor. Besides, it is hardly credible, that St. John resided at Ephesus, (from which place it is pre-supposed that he was sent into banishment) so early as the time of Claudius: for the account given, Acts xix, of St. Paul’s stay and conduct at Ephesus, manifestly implies that no Apostle had already founded and governed a Christian church there. And when St. Paul left the place, the Ephesians had no bishop: for in an Epistle to Timothy written for that purpose, he gave orders to regulate the church at Ephesus, and to ordain bishops. This argument may perhaps be strengthened by observing that the second apocalyptical Epistle ch. ii. 1, is addressed to the angel of the church of Ephesus, that is, as is commonly understood, to the bishop of that church. It has been doubted however, whether the expression *αγγελος της εκκλησιας*, used in the Apocalypse, really denotes the bishop of the church: and I remember to have read in

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<sup>c</sup> See Lardner, Vol. I. p. 356.

an English periodical publication, a short essay by an anonymous author, in which this expression is rendered by ‘Messenger of the church,’ the author being of opinion, that the seven churches, to which the seven Epistles in the Apocalypse are addressed, had sent messengers to St. John while he was in banishment in the island of Patmos. But as each of these Epistles is addressed τῷ ἀγγέλῳ τῆς ἐκκλησίας, the word ἀγγελος cannot denote a messenger sent to St. John, for with such a person the Apostle had a verbal communication, and was therefore under no necessity of writing to him.

2. The second opinion, that St. John was banished to Patmos, and wrote the Apocalypse there, in the reign of the Emperor Nero, is not liable to the objections, which are made to the preceding opinion. It has however only one evidence in its favour: and this evidence, as Lardner observes<sup>d</sup>, is not only without name, but without date. I mean the subscription to the Syriac version of the Apocalypse, which is, ‘The Revelation, which was made by God to John the Evangelist in the island of Patmos, whither he was banished by the Emperor Nero.’

But since the Syriac version of the Apocalypse is now known to be a part of the Philoxenian version, which was made by Polycarp at the beginning of the sixth century, and afterwards corrected by Thomas of Harkel<sup>e</sup>, the subscription to it cannot be said to be wholly anonymous, and it may be regarded as the evidence of a writer, who lived in the beginning of the sixth century. If the same subscription was annexed to the more ancient version of the Apocalypse, used by Ephrem and the Manichees, it might be called indeed anonymous, but then its importance would be increased on another account, by its being so much more ancient.

The opinion that the Apocalypse was written in the reign of Nero has been strongly supported by Newton, and Harenberg, whose arguments have been ably examined

<sup>d</sup> Supplement, Vol. I. p. 374.

<sup>e</sup> See this Introduction, Vol. II. ch. vii. sect. xi.

mined by Lardner, to whom I refer every one who wishes to know what may be said for and against the question. And as the inquiry is of such a nature, that an absolute decision is not to be expected, I shall only observe that several arguments in favour of this opinion, especially those used by Harenberg, prove nothing more, than that the *Apocalypse*, if it is a divine work, cannot have been written later than the reign of Nero. Consequently, unless the divinity of the *Apocalypse* be taken for granted, such reasoning is without force.

3. According to the third opinion, the *Apocalypse* was written before the time of Domitian, and before the Jewish war, but whether in the reign of Claudius or in the reign of Nero, is left undetermined. Now, when the words of an evidence are so indecisive as to be capable of a two-fold interpretation, it is consistent with equity to admit that which is the most probable : and, since for the reasons above-mentioned, it is hardly possible that the *Apocalypse* should have been written in the reign of Claudius, I will suppose that according to this opinion likewise, the *Apocalypse* was written in the reign of Nero,

Arethas, who according to some critics lived in the sixth, according to others in the tenth century,\* wrote a commentary on the *Apocalypse*, in which he expressly refers it to a period, prior to the commencement of the Jewish war. Lardner indeed observes, and not without reason, that Arethas is not a writer of sufficient antiquity to be here regarded as a witness : but as what Arethas says seems to imply really ancient testimony, I will examine his account more minutely<sup>f</sup>.

In his explanation of the sixth seal ch. vi, 12—17, Arethas says, that *some* understood it figurately, and explained it of the conquest of Jerusalem by Titus, though

<sup>f</sup> The edition of Arethas's Commentary, which I here quote, is that which is printed at the end of the second volume of the Paris edition of *Œcumenius*.



though most persons referred it to Antichrist<sup>s</sup>. Now whoever explains ch. vi. 12—17, as a prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem, must pre-suppose that the Apocalypse was written before that event, for otherwise such an explanation would be an inconsistency. But I will not push this inference too far, because Lardner observes<sup>h</sup>, that Arethas might have believed the visions in the sixth chapter were representations not of future, but of past events. However there is another passage in the commentary of Arethas, which puts the matter out of doubt, and clearly shews that in his opinion the Apocalypse was written before the Jewish war. For after he has explained what is said of the four angels, which stood on the four corners of the earth, ch. vii, 1—3, as relating to what happened to the Jews as a punishment for their conduct toward Christ, and has interpreted the hundred and forty four thousand, who were sealed ch. vii, 4—8, of the Jews, who believed in Christ, and had no part in the unhappy fate of Jerusalem<sup>i</sup>, he adds, ‘For destruction by the arms of the Romans was not yet come upon the Jews, when he received these prophecies.’ Here it must be remarked that Arethas was not an original commentator, but that he exhibited in his own work a synopsis of the commentaries of Andrew of Cæsarea, who lived about the year 500, and of others who had written on the Apocalypse. But the explanation of the sixth chapter, as referring to the destruction of Jerusalem was not taken from Andrew: for though Andrew quotes it in his commentary as an explanation, which had been given, yet he himself rejects it<sup>k</sup>. We must

<sup>s</sup> Pag. 709. ch. xviii. Τινες δὲ ταῦτα εἰς τὴν ὑπο Οὐεσπασιανῆς γενομένην πολιορκίαν ἐξέλαβον, πάντα τὰ εἰρημένα τροπολογησαντες. Οἱ δὲ πλείοι τῶν ἐρμηνευτῶν σεισμόν τὴν μεταβάσιν εἰρηκασί τὴν ἀπο τῶν ἐν τοῖς δια Χριστὸν διωγμοῖς γενομένην εἰς τὸν κατὰ τὴν Ἀντιχρίστου καιρὸν.

<sup>h</sup> Supplement, Vol. I. p. 372.

<sup>i</sup> Ib. p. 713.

<sup>k</sup> Ch. xviii, xix. p. 27. 29. Ed. Syllburg.

must conclude therefore, that Arethas borrowed this explanation, and consequently the previous supposition, that the Apocalypse was written before the Jewish war, from some more ancient writer. But we know of no other commentator on the Apocalypse before Andrew of Cæsarea, than Hippolytus, who lived at the end of the second century. It is therefore not improbable that Arethas borrowed it from Hippolytus: and if he did, it is supported by the authority of a very ancient writer.

Perhaps also Irenæus may be quoted in favour of the same opinion, at least, if the construction which Knittel has put upon his words be the true one. This however is a question which will be examined in the next article. At present I will only observe, that if Irenæus, the scholar of Polycarp really referred the Apocalypse to a period prior to the reign of Domitian, and if he thus ceases to be the grand support of the opposite opinion, that it was written during the reign of Domitian, an opinion adopted by his successors on his authority, we may with safety assume, that the Apocalypse was written before the time of Domitian, before the Jewish war, and probably in the reign of Nero.

4. The common opinion that St. John was banished to Patmos, and saw the visions related in the Apocalypse, during the reign of Domitian, is grounded on a passage in the works of Irenæus<sup>1</sup>, the Greek text of which is thus quoted by Eusebius<sup>m</sup>, Γραφῶν γέτοί ὁ Εἰρηναῖος περὶ τῆς ψυχῆς τῆς κατὰ τὸν Ἀντιχρίστου προσηγορίας φερομένης ἐν τῷ Ἰωάννῃ λεγομένη Ἀποκαλύψει, αὐταῖς συλλαβαῖς ἐν πεμπτῷ τῶν πρὸς τὰς αἵρεσεις ταῦτα περὶ τοῦ Ἰωάννῃ φησιν. “Εἰ δὲ ἐδεῖ ἀναφανδὸν ἐν τῷ νῦν καιρῷ κηρυττεσθαι τὸ ὄνομα τῆτο, δι’ ἐκεῖνε ἀν’ ἐρρεῖη τὴ καὶ τὴν Ἀποκαλύψιν ἐωρακὸς. Οὐδὲ γὰρ πρὸ πολλοῦ χρόνου ἐωράθη, ἀλλὰ σχεδὸν ἐπὶ τῆς ἡμετέρας γενεᾶς, πρὸς τὸ τέλος τῆς Δομετιανῆς ἀρχῆς.” This quotation from Irenæus has been generally interpreted thus: ‘ If it had been proper, that this name should be proclaimed in the present

<sup>1</sup> Adv. Hæres. Lib. V. cap. 30. § 3.

<sup>m</sup> Hist. Eccles. Lib. III. cap. 18.

present time, it would have been made known by him who saw the Revelation. For it was seen only a short time ago, almost in our own age, towards the close of the reign of Domitian.<sup>n</sup> And almost all the ecclesiastical writers, who have spoken of the time when the Apocalypse was written, have followed this account.

But several modern commentators, who wish to refer the Apocalypse to the reign of Nero, that they may be better able to explain its prophecies, contend that the words of Irenæus have been misunderstood by ecclesiastical writers, and that Irenæus did not mean to say, that the Revelation was seen in the reign of Domitian. Wetstein for instance, asserts that the verb *εωραθη* refers, not to *Αποκαλυψις* but to *Ιωαννης*, and that the words of Irenæus signify only that St. John was seen at the end of Domitian's reign<sup>n</sup>. And Harenberg<sup>o</sup>, though he admits that *εωραθη* should be construed with *Αποκαλυψις*, yet he assigns to the expression *εωραθη Αποκαλυψις* a meaning totally different from that which is usually assigned to it, and explains it as denoting, not that the visions were seen by St. John so late as the reign of Domitian, but that the Apocalypse, namely the book so called, was first seen by the Christians of Gaul (where Irenæus resided) in the reign of Domitian<sup>p</sup>. Both of these interpretations appear to me very improbable.

However

<sup>n</sup> Ubi nihil cogit, *εωραθη* interpretari de apocalypsi visa, aut cum interprete Latino Irenæi de nomine viso, cum commodissime et verissime de ipso Joanne dici possit, eum sub exitum imperii Domitiani conspectum fuisse. Wetstein, N. T. Tom. II. p. 746.

<sup>o</sup> Pag. 6, 7. 64. of his Exposition of the Apocalypse.

<sup>p</sup> He likewise takes the name Domitian in a figurative sense, and supposes that it denotes, not the emperor, who properly bore that name, but either Marcus Aurelius or Septimus Severus, to each of whom, on account of their persecution of the Christians, he says the name of Domitian was applicable. Now the only reason, which can be assigned for this very forced interpretation is, that Irenæus uses the expression *σχεδον επι της ημετερας γενεας*, which Harenberg translates 'within the last thirty years,' ascribing to *γενεα* the sense, which genealogists ascribe to the very word 'generation,' and at the same time wholly overlooking *σχεδον*. Now though I grant that in genealogical computations



However there is a third interpretation given by Knittel, which is less liable to objection, and which though it is the most new, may in some measure be said to be the most ancient. According to this interpretation, *εωραθη* is referred to *το ονομα*, that is, to the name of the beast, whose number is 666: for on this number Irenæus is discoursing in the passage in question, and explains it as denoting Titan, which, when written in Greek TEITAN, contains six letters, which makes out the number 666. This name Knittel considers as an illusion to the prænomen of Domitian, which was Titus, and says, that the name of Titan was justly applicable to Domitian, because toward the close of his reign he insisted on divine honours being paid him, and was therefore a *θεομαχος*, as the Titans were. It is true that *ονομα* is not so suitable to *εωραθη*, as it would be to *ηκουσθη*: but even this difficulty will be removed, if we only supply the word ‘Titan.’ According to this explanation then, the meaning of Irenæus will be, ‘Titan shewed himself not long before our time, toward the close of the reign of Domitian;’ for this emperor exhibited his bad qualities, chiefly in the latter part of his reign, when he conducted himself in such a manner as might be expected from the Antichrist, or the threatened Titan. Irenæus indeed did not believe that Domitian was the real Antichrist predicted in the Apocalypse, whose coming he still expected: yet he might regard  
Domitian

computations the word *γενεα* may be taken in this restricted sense, yet when an author says in indefinite terms *σχεδον επι της ημετερας γενεας*, he can mean only ‘not long before our time,’ that is, not long before I, or at least many persons now living were born.’ And since Irenæus himself was born in the year 130, he might without impropriety apply the expression to an event which happened at the end of Domitian’s reign, especially as he speaks in the plural number, and there were undoubtedly many persons alive when he wrote, who were born still earlier than himself. I might surely say, in the present year 1786, that Prussia was erected into a monarchy almost in our own time: for, though this event took place seventeen years before I was born, yet the use of the particle ‘almost,’ and of the plural number, many persons being now alive, who were born before that event, renders the expression perfectly admissible.



Domitian as a forerunner and type of the true Antichrist. Such is Knittel's opinion: and this at least must be admitted, that his construction of *εωραθη* with *ονομα* is supported by the authority of the old Latin translator of Irenæus's works, who has rendered the passage in question in the following manner: Si oporteret manifeste præsentì tempore præconari nomen ejus, per ipsum utique edictum fuisset, qui et Apocalypsin viderat. Neque enim ante multum temporis *visum est*, sed pene sub nostro seculo, ad finem Domitiani imperii. Further, Knittel appeals to the context of the Latin translation, and supports his opinion by very plausible arguments. If he is in the right, the Apocalypse was not only written before the reign of Domitian, but contains prophecies, which relate to him.

5. In a Latin work, containing the lives of the Apostles, ascribed to Dorotheus, who lived at the end of the third and the beginning of the fourth century, and who is said to have been bishop of Tyre, the banishment of St. John to the island of Patmos is placed in the reign of Trajan: but at the same time it is observed, that in the opinion of others he was banished in the reign of Domitian<sup>a</sup>. Of these Latin lives there exists a Greek translation, made by a person unknown: and this Greek translation, as published by Cave, mentions likewise Trajan.

6. On the other hand, according to another copy, which Knittel found in a Wolfenbüttel manuscript of the Apocalypse, 'St. John was banished to Patmos by the Emperor Hadrian'. These two last dates are supported by only one evidence, and it is moreover uncertain whether he meant Trajan or Hadrian. For this reason I barely mention these dates, without inquiring into their probability.

Among these different opinions relative to the time when the Apocalypse was written, our choice must in a great measure depend on the opinion which we entertain of

<sup>a</sup> Bibliotheca Patrum maxima, Tom. VII. 122.

<sup>†</sup> See Knittel, p. 88, 89.

of the work itself, whether we consider it as an inspired book, or regard it only as a human composition.

If we consider the Apocalypse as a divine work, I think we must confine our choice to those dates which precede the commencement of the Jewish war: for thus only shall we be enabled to shew that its first prophecies were fulfilled in a short time. And I grant that if it is referred to the reign of Claudius, the explanation of it is still easier, than when it is referred to the reign of Nero: for the scarcity predicted, chap. vi. 6, is descriptive of that which took place in the time of Claudius.

If it be considered as a mere human invention, it may be either ascribed to Cerinthus, or attributed to some unknown writer, who lived between the time of Papias and that of Justin Martyr<sup>s</sup>: in the latter case it might have been written in the reign of Hadrian. But if it be really a forgery, if it contains prophecies of the Jewish war made after the events themselves had taken place, we have reason to wonder that the author did not prophesy more circumstantially, and that he appears so little acquainted with the events of that war<sup>t</sup>.

## S E C T. X.

### *Of the Greek style of the Apocalypse.*

**I**N examining the question, whether St. John the Apostle was the author of the Apocalypse, its Greek style, which differs from that of every other book in the New Testament, deserves particular attention. But the application of the remarks to be made on this subject will depend on the question examined in the preceding section,

<sup>s</sup> See what was said of Papias and Justin Martyr in the second section of this chapter.

<sup>t</sup> See the latter part of the seventh section.

section, namely, at what time the Apocalypse was written : for it cannot be denied, that the same author may at one period of his life make use of a style, which is very different from that which he has used at another.

That the style of the Apocalypse is very unlike that of any other book of the New Testament, is a fact, which no man, who understands Greek, and is capable of judging impartially, will deny. Nor is this difference of such a kind only, that we might ascribe it to the peculiarity of the subject, and say, that the same author, when he wrote in the character of a prophet, would use different modes of expression from those which he had adopted as an historian : whence might be explained the contrast between the simple unadorned style of St. John's Gospel, and the rich figurative language of the Apocalypse. But when the rules of the Greek grammar are accurately observed in St. John's Gospel, and are frequently violated in the Apocalypse, we have a difference, which cannot be ascribed to the dissimilitude of the subject : for the same author, who wrote correctly as an historian, would not be guilty of solecisms even in writing prophecies.

Dionysius of Alexandria, whose modesty and gentleness of temper I commended in the second section of this chapter, was well aware of the difference between the style of the Apocalypse, and that of St. John's genuine writings : and for this very reason, though he did not venture to deny that the Apocalypse was a sacred book, yet he asserted that St. John the Apostle was not the author of it. The difference in question may be reduced to the following heads :

1. The Apocalypse abounds with harsh constructions, in which a nominative is placed, where another case ought to have been used. Of this sort the following instances have been alleged by Bengel<sup>u</sup> : ch. i. 5. *απο Ιησϋ Χρισϋ, ὁ μαρτυρὸς ὁ πιστός* : ii. 20. *την γυναῖκα ἣ λεγεται* : iii. 12. *της καινης Ἰερουσαλημ, ἣ καταβαινουσα* : viii. 9. *το τριτον των κτισματων τα εχοντα ψυχας* : ix. 14. *τω αγγελῳ ὁ εχων*

<sup>u</sup> Apparatus Criticus : Fundam. crit. Apoc. § 5.

εχων την σαλπιγγα : xiv. 12. των ἁγίων οἱ τηρεντες : xviii. 11, 12. τον γομον αυτων εδεις αγοραζει ουκετι, γομος χρυσ : xx. 2. τον δρακοντα, ὁ οφίς ὁ αρχαιος : xxi. 10. 12. την πολιν—εχεσα. He further adds : nec longe abeunt illa, xiv. 5. τῷ θηριῳ, και την εικονα αυτα : xvii. 4. βδελυγματων, και τα ακαθαρτα : vel etiam, iv. 4. vii. 9, xiii. 3.

To these examples selected by Bengel may be added the following : In ch. i. 6, the reading of most manuscripts is ἐποίησεν ἡμᾶς βασιλειαν ἱερείς, which is taken from the Hebrew text of Exod. xix. 6, ‘a kingdom of priests,’ though the seventy have rendered it in a different manner, namely, βασιλειον ἱερατευμα : but the author of the Apocalypse follows not the Greek, but the Hebrew, and lets ἱερείς remain with its termination unaltered to denote a genitive. In ch. ii. 13, according to the common printed text, mention is made of a martyr Antipas, a person unknown in ecclesiastical history : but four manuscripts, instead of a proper name Ἀντιπας, have the verb ἀντειπας, and with the following strange construction, ἐν αἷς ἀντειπας ὁ μαρτυς με ὁ πισος, ‘in which thou hast spoken against my faithful witness.’ The reading ἀντειπας is supported also by the authority of the Syriac version, and of the Arabic version published by Erpenius, which in other places of the Apocalypse does not usually follow the Syriac. Both of these versions express in quibus contendisti cum teste, &c.

Constructions of this kind were probably not unusual among the Greek Jews : at least I have found several examples in those books of the Septuagint which are not so well translated as the Pentateuch<sup>w</sup> ; for instance, 2 Sam. xv. 31. και ἀπηγγελη Δαυιδ λεγοντες, and Isaiah xxiv. 16. και τοις αθετησιν οἱ αθετηντες τον νομον. But we find no such examples in the Gospel and Epistles of St. John : and this extraordinary use of the nominative for another case will hardly be confounded with the nominative absolute of Attic writers.

But

<sup>w</sup> Even in the Pentateuch, according to the text of the Codex Alexandrinus we meet with some examples of this kind : Gen. xiv. 13. ἐν τῇ δυνι τῇ Μαμβρη ὁ Ἀμορρεῖς. xl. 5. ὁρασις τε ἐνυπνιε αυτε, ὁ αρχαιοτοχος, και ὁ αρχισυντοποιος.



But before I proceed, I must acknowledge, that the examples of harsh construction above-quoted from the Apocalypse, if we except that which was taken from ch. i. 5, though they are found in good manuscripts are not contained in all, and that they have been adopted in very few printed editions, in most of which the nominative is converted into a case more suitable to the context. Here then it may be objected, that when we have the choice of two readings, one of which is grammatically correct, while the other contains false grammar, we ought to ascribe the latter, not to the incorrectness of the author, but to the inaccuracy of a transcriber. Now if a grammatical error was found in a manuscript of Cicero's works, no doubt could be entertained that the ungrammatical reading did not proceed from the pen of the author: but that the ungrammatical constructions in the manuscripts of the Apocalypse cannot be ascribed wholly to the copyists\*, will appear from the following arguments.

First, though an illiterate transcriber may sometimes copy falsely, and convert an accurate expression into a solecism, yet it is incredible that several transcribers should agree not only in copying falsely in the very same places, but likewise in substituting the same mistaken readings, and in converting the true case into a nominative without any assignable reason.

Secondly, these unusual constructions occur too frequently in the Apocalypse to be imputed wholly to transcribers: for, if they arose merely from the inaccuracy of transcribers, we should as frequently meet with such examples in the other books of the New Testament, as in the Apocalypse, many of the transcribers of which have not copied this book alone. Since then these ungrammatical constructions occur so frequently in the Apocalypse, but not in other books of the New Testament written by the same transcribers, the only inference to be drawn is that they proceeded from the author himself.

Thirdly,

\* Bengel says of the examples above-quoted, *Singulatim hæc exhibere facile est: universa nemo convellat.*

Thirdly, it is certain that these ungrammatical constructions existed in the Apocalypse long before our most ancient manuscripts were written: and therefore they cannot be ascribed to the ignorance of copyists in the middle ages. For even in the third century, when ancient Greek was still a living language, and when therefore it cannot be supposed that Greek transcribers would in copying make grammatical mistakes, Dionysius of Alexandria delivered his opinion of the language of the Apocalypse in the following words<sup>y</sup>: ‘ I find the language used by the author not good Greek; for it is disfigured by barbarisms and sometimes by solecisms, which I do not think it necessary to quote, as it is my intention not to ridicule, but only to shew that the style of these writings<sup>z</sup> is not the same<sup>a</sup>.

2. The Apocalypse abounds with Hebraisms much more than the writings of St. John.

It is true that some critics have gone too far with this assertion, and have represented St. John’s Gospel as perfectly pure Greek<sup>b</sup>, while the Apocalypse has been charged with Hebraisms in places where there really are none. But that the Hebraisms in the Apocalypse are more numerous and more harsh, than those in the Gospel and the Epistles of St. John, is a fact which must be so visible to every one who has only a moderate knowledge of Hebrew, that I think it unnecessary to quote examples.

3. Though

<sup>y</sup> Euseb. Hist. Eccles. Lib. VII. cap. 25.

<sup>z</sup> Namely St. John’s Gospel and the Apocalypse.

<sup>a</sup> It is not improbable that many of the solecisms of which Dionysius speaks in the third century were gradually corrected by transcribers. See Vol. I. Ch. VI. Sect. XI. of this Introduction. The number of the MSS. of the Apocalypse hitherto collated is inconsiderable: and it is possible that into all of these the grammatical corrections have found their way. Attention therefore must be paid to whatever solecisms may be found in single manuscripts of the Apocalypse, for they may be remnants of the ancient reading: for instance that of the Wolfenbüttel manuscript, Ch. viii. 2. ἐδόθη αὐτοῖς ἑπτὰ σάλπιγγες.

<sup>b</sup> For instance Dionysius of Alexandria, at the end of the passage quoted by Eusebius.

3. Though the figurative language of the Apocalypse, when compared with the simple style of St. John's Gospel, cannot be alleged as an argument that the two books were written by different authors, since the same author, when animated by a spirit of prophecy will write in a different manner from that in which he had written as an historian, yet there is a certain character in the language in the Apocalypse which is hardly to be reconciled with the manner, which is visible in St. John's Gospel. Throughout almost the whole of the Apocalypse we find the author an imitator of the ancient prophets, from whom he borrows his images, and renders them more beautiful than they were in the originals: but St. John's Gospel has a soft and gentle character so peculiar to itself, as to exhibit no trace of imitation. Further, the author of the Apocalypse (whom from the title of the book I will call St. John the Divine, in contradistinction to St. John the Apostle,) has not borrowed his imagery merely from the canonical books of the Old Testament, for he has taken a great part of it from the Jewish antiquities, and the theology of the Rabbins, so that his work has almost a cabalistic appearance. And he not only seems himself to be intimately acquainted with these subjects, but to presuppose the same intimacy in his readers, and to have written for those only who were initiated in the abstrusest doctrines which were taught in the schools of the Rabbins: nor does it even once occur to him, that what he says may appear foreign or obscure. But St. John the Apostle seems to have been well aware that not all his readers had this kind of knowledge: for he has frequently explained circumstances relative to the city of Jerusalem, and the customs of the Jews, with more historical perspicuity, than we find even in the other Evangelists.

4. On the other hand, the language of the Apocalypse is both beautiful and sublime, is affecting and animating: and this not only in the original, but in every, even the worst, translation of it. Who can read, if he reads without prejudice, the following address of Jesus to



John sinking to the ground through fear, and not be affected by the greatness of the thoughts and the expressions. ‘Fear not, I am the first and the last: I am he that was dead, but now liveth: behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death<sup>d</sup>.’ The Apocalypse has something in it, which enchants, and insensibly inspires the reader with the sublime spirit of the author. When future blessedness is promised, or the New Jerusalem described, a man must be devoid of feeling, who is not affected: and when the author denounces judgment to the wicked, and represents the smoke of their torment ascending up for ever and ever, before the throne of God and his angels, one must be either prejudiced before one reads, or one cannot read without terror. A great part of the imagery is borrowed from the ancient prophets: but the imitation is for the most part more beautiful and more magnificent than the original, which is particularly true of what is borrowed from Ezekiel. And the imagery which is taken from the theology of the Rabbins, acquires in the Apocalypse a taste and eloquence, of which the Rabbinical writings themselves are wholly destitute.

St. John’s Gospel has likewise its beauties, but then they are beauties of a very different kind. For while the Author of the Apocalypse hurries us away to enchanted ground, and resembles a torrent which carries every thing before it, St. John the Apostle is plainness and gentleness, and is like a clear rivulet, which flows without rapidity and violence. Is it possible therefore that St. John the Apostle, and the author of the Apocalypse, called St. John the Divine, were one and the same person?

5. Dionysius of Alexandria remarks, that St. John the Apostle has not mentioned his own name either in his Gospel, or in any of his Epistles, but that, when he has occasion to speak of himself he makes use of a circumlocution. On the other hand, St. John the Divine mentions his own name, not only in places, where it was requisite,

<sup>d</sup> Ch. i. 17, 18.



requisite, as in the address to the seven churches, ch. i. 4; but likewise in places where the single pronoun ‘I,’ or the expression ‘he who saw this,’ would have been full as proper as the term ‘I John.’ The one appears to have an excessive modesty, and to avoid even the shadow of egotism: the other avoids it so little, that he is lavish in the use of his name. And what renders this difference the more remarkable, is, that the circumlocution by which St. John the Apostle denotes himself, namely, ‘the disciple whom Jesus loved,’ is not once used by St. John the Divine.

It is an undeniable fact therefore that the style of the Apocalypse is very different from that of St. John’s Gospel. It is true that some commentators, in order to shew a similarity between the language of the Apocalypse and that of St. John’s Gospel and Epistles, have selected expressions from the former, which resemble those that occur in the latter. This has been particularly done by Leonard Twells, whose defence of the Apocalypse is inserted in Wolfii Curæ<sup>e</sup>. But in Lardner’s opinion, to whose judgment I fully accede, the examples selected by Twells are by no means sufficient to prove a similarity of style: and, even if they were selected with more judgment, and the resemblance in those particular instances, admitted of no doubt<sup>f</sup>, still the dissimilarity will remain in

<sup>e</sup> Vindiciæ Apocalypseos, p. 399—404.

<sup>f</sup> I will mention one or two examples, which have occurred to me in reading the Apocalypse. The word *αἰνιον* which occurs so frequently in the Apocalypse, (a word seldom used in the LXX) is found no where else in the whole N. T. except in the Gospel of St. John, ch. xxi. 15. The expression *ποσειν αληθειαν* and *ποσειν ψευδος* is used Apoc. xxii. 15, and in the first Epistle of St. John, ch. i. 6. Further in Apoc. i. 7, there is a quotation from Zech. xii. 10, not according to the text of the Septuagint, but with a different reading, as in St. John’s Gospel, ch. xix. 37.: and it is remarkable that this passage from Zechariah, which occurred to St. John, when he saw Christ pierced on the cross, is quoted by no other of the sacred writers. This last example has been already noted by Twells, but he has not given it the force of which it is capable. See my History of the Resurrection, p. 31. However these instances will not prove that the Apocalypse was written by St. John the Apostle: for the author of it may in some cases have imitated St. John’s manner, in order to make his work pass the more easily for the composition of St. John.

in other places, and will remain so great, that they who have thence inferred, that the Apocalypse was not written by St. John the Apostle, have drawn an inference which is not devoid of probability.

To this inference however it may be objected, that a course of years might have made a material alteration in St. John's style, since the manner of writing which we have adopted in the early part of life, is frequently changed in a later part of it, especially when the former manner was imperfect, and stood in need of improvement. It is possible, therefore, that St. John in the earlier part of his life, might have written with the fire which is visible in the Apocalypse, and, being at that time less conversant with Greek, wrote incorrectly, and retained also much of the oriental manner, but that in his old age he wrote with that gentleness which is visible in his Gospel, and likewise, in consequence of his long residence at Ephesus, more correct Greek. All this may be inferred on the supposition that the Apocalypse was written in the reign of Claudius or of Nero: but if it was written in the reign of Domitian, its style is an irresistible argument that St. John the Apostle was not the author. For in a work written by St. John in his old age, after he had long resided among the Greeks, he would hardly have violated those very rules of grammar which he had observed in his Gospel: his style would hardly have become more oriental: nor would he have displayed that fire of composition which he had not exhibited in his earlier works.

The question therefore whether the Apocalypse is a divine book, depends again on the time when it was written, whether so early as the reign of Claudius or of Nero, or so late as the reign of Domitian. If according to the common opinion, it was written in the reign of Domitian, I do not see in what manner its divinity can be supported.

## S E C T. XI.

*Whether the Apocalypse was originally written in Hebrew,*

SOME commentators have supposed that the Apocalypse was originally written in Hebrew, and that our Greek text is only a translation. Now it cannot be denied, that the mode of writing is quite oriental: but since the testimony of no ancient writer can be produced in favour of the opinion that it was written originally in Hebrew, and its oriental style may be easily explained on the supposition, that the author of it was a Hebrew by birth, and though, in his native language, he wrote in Greek, to which he was less accustomed, the notion of a Hebrew original appears to be without foundation.

But that I may not be unjust to an opinion which I do not think proper to adopt, I will observe that one might allege in favour of it several various readings, which have the appearance of being different translations of the same Hebrew word. For instance, instead of the very improbable reading<sup>s</sup> *δυσ μυριαδες μυριαδων* (two hundred millions) ch. ix. 16, several manuscripts have, as I think more properly, *μυριαδες μυριαδων*, which is an indeterminate expression, and nothing more than an hyperbole, denoting a very great number in general. Here if the Hebrew word *רבתיים* had been used in the original, it might have been taken by one person for the plural and rendered *μυριαδες μυριαδων*, by another for the dual and rendered *δυσ μυριαδες μυριαδων*, in the same manner as *רבתיים*, Pf. lxviii. 18, is by some explained 'two myriads.'—Instead of *και λεγει μοι*, ch. x. 11, nine MSS. quoted by Wettstein, to which may be added the Wolfenbüttel MS. have *και λεγουσι μοι*. These may be

<sup>s</sup> The reason why I consider this reading as very improbable is assigned in the Orient. Bib. Vol. VIII. p. 158, 159.

be two different translations of the Hebrew, ואמר לי, one translator rendering literally, the other taking אמר impersonally in the sense of 'one says,' or 'they say,' in which manner the word is frequently used by modern rabbins.—Instead of κατοικευστας, ch. xiv. 6, the Complutensian edition, sixteen MSS. quoted by Wetstein, the Wolfenbüttel MS. Origen, Andrew, Arethas, and the Vulgate, have καθημενους. These two readings may be different translations of the Hebrew ישבם.

However such examples are by no means sufficient to prove a position, which is wholly unsupported by historical evidence. For these variations may be easily explained on other suppositions: the last variation, for instance καθημενους, which is a harsh Hebraism, is probably the genuine reading, and κατοικευστας, added in the margin as an explanation of it, was afterwards in some manuscripts inserted in the text.

## SECT. XII.

### *Remarks on the doctrine delivered in the Apocalypse.*

**L**UTHER in his preface to the *Apocalypse* prefixed to the edition, which was printed in 1522, objects, that Christ was not taught in the *Apocalypse*, which an Apostle is above all things bound to do, since Christ himself says, Acts i, 'Ye shall be my witnesses.' Now this objection, delivered in such general terms, is, I think, without foundation: and I cannot conceive how Luther could say, that Christ is not taught in a book, in which so frequent mention is made, and that too in very affecting terms, of our redemption by Christ's blood and death. But the true and eternal Godhead of Christ is certainly not taught in the *Apocalypse* so clearly as in St. John's Gospel, though the author



speaks in enthusiastic language of the greatness of Christ's ministry, and the glory communicated to his human nature. At the very beginning of the book Christ is placed after the seven spirits, who stand near the throne of God: nor is he ever called God, or the creator of the world, throughout the whole work. Even the form under which Christ appears, ch. i. 13—15, is, with only a few alterations, borrowed from Dan. x. 5, 6, where is given the description of an angel. It is true, that Christ is called *ὁ Λόγος τῆς Θεᾶς*, ch. xix. 13, : but this appellation is not decisive, for it appears from the antitheses, which St. John in the beginning of his Gospel makes against Cerinthus, that even false teachers could give to Christ the title of 'Word of God,' without acknowledging, that he was God himself. And on account of this very appellation used ch. xix. 13, the suspicion arose, that Cerinthus was the author of the Apocalypse, because it is used by no other of the sacred writers than St. John, but was the common appellation of Christ's divine nature among the Gnostics. St. John in his Gospel was under the necessity of retaining this expression, because he makes antitheses against the Gnostics: but in the Apocalypse no such motive could have taken place, and if this book was written in the time of Nero, before the breaking out of the Cerinthian heresy, and long before St. John's Gospel was written, it is difficult to comprehend how St. John, at so early a period, came to apply the appellation of 'Word of God' to Christ's divine nature. Further, it is true, that Christ is called in the Apocalypse, ch. i. 17, 'the first and the last:': and this expression, if taken in the same sense, as that in which it is used, Isaiah xli. 4. xlv. 6. xlviii. 12, may denote Christ's eternal Godhead. Yet it is not absolutely decisive: for the meaning of ch. i. 17, may be, 'Fear not, I am the first (whom thou knewest as mortal), and the last (whom thou now seest immortal), still the same, whom thou knewest from the beginning.' The same explanation may be given of ch. ii. 8, where  
the

the expression 'the first and the last' again occurs and is used in connexion with Christ's resurrection from the dead. On the other hand, in ch. ix. 11, where the words are less dubious, *αρχη και τελος*, is a spurious addition.

In the twelfth chapter of the Apocalypse is delivered an extraordinary doctrine relative to an heavenly mother, who bare in heaven a child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron. This is a doctrine which is taught in no other part of the Bible: but it resembles what was taught by several heretics, concerning the mother of life, who bare the first heavenly man, that is, the heavenly Jesus. And as, according to their doctrine, the prince of darkness devours a part of the armour of the first man, so in the twelfth chapter of the Apocalypse, the dragon endeavours to devour the new born child, who is caught up to God and his throne, as the first man was according to the heretics. The 15th verse resembles likewise what the heretics say of the drowned Jesus, with only this difference, that what they said of Jesus is here said of the mother. The whole of this chapter may be explained indeed in such a manner, as to remove all offence: yet it is difficult to read it, without thinking of certain cabalistic, Gnostic, and what in later ages were Manichean doctrines, especially if one has examined what Beaufobre has written in his *Histoire des Manichéens*, Liv. VI. ch. 3. Liv. VIII. ch. 4.

The seven spirits of God, from whom a salutation is sent, ch. i. 4, and who are placed before Christ himself, create likewise a difficulty, which commentators endeavour to remove by saying, that nothing more is meant than the single person of the Holy Ghost: but as the Jews really speak of seven archangels, who had access to the throne of God, the seven spirits before the throne of God, mentioned ch. i. 4, can hardly be interpreted of the Holy Ghost. One may imagine, that inspiration is ascribed to these seven spirits, and that hence they are called in the Apocalypse, not angels, but spirits. The image of the seven lamps, under which  
they

they are represented, ch. iv. 5, is very suitable to this notion: and the expression ‘he hath the seven spirits of God,’ ch. iii. 1, may denote the highest degree of inspiration. But the most important passage is, ch. xxii. 6, according to the reading, *Κυριος ὁ Θεος των πνευματων των προφητων απεστειλε τον αγγελον αυτης*, where several spirits are mentioned, who inspired the prophets, and one of them appears to be the spirit who shewed to the author of the Apocalypse the principal visions.

In no book of the New Testament is so frequent mention made of angels as in the Apocalypse, in which they appear to be appropriated to particular countries and elements. This however may be considered as mere imagery, and explained according to the principles laid down in the sixth section of this chapter. The worshipping of angels is clearly forbidden in the Apocalypse: but in ch. viii. 2, 3, a high sacerdotal office is assigned to an angel, which we are accustomed to assign only to our Redeemer.

The doctrine of the Millennium is that which created the greatest number of adversaries to the Apocalypse in the early ages of Christianity, and excited the suspicion that it was a forgery of Cerinthus. They were particularly displeased with the representation, that after the resurrection of the dead a worldly kingdom should be established on earth for a thousand years. Even to us this doctrine appears strange and incredible: but to the ancient fathers, who, agreeably to the commonly received philosophy in those days, derived all sin from the gross particles of matter of which the body is composed, it necessarily gave more offence. And if in this kingdom marriages were to be celebrated, and festivals held, which however is not expressly asserted in the Apocalypse, all those fathers, who declaimed against bodily pleasures, and regarded the state of celibacy as a state of holiness, of course disapproved of the life to be led in this kingdom, as being, according to their notions, much too sensual, even if the marriages and festivals were confined wholly to those, who  
should



should be alive at the general resurrection. The doctrine of the Millennium was rejected by the reformers in the sixteenth century on a very different account, and was condemned, not merely as a speculative, but as a dangerous practical error. For the expectation of a kingdom in which pure saints should rule over the unregenerate children of the world began to excite a spirit of sedition, as it is very easy for the unruly members of a discontented party to fancy, that they themselves are the saints, and their opponents the unregenerate: and for this very reason the Augsbург Confession<sup>h</sup> condemns the doctrine of the Millennium in express terms. Further, according to the representation of the ancient Chiliafts, offerings and offering-festivals were to be celebrated in this kingdom: but such notions are inconsistent with St. Paul's doctrine concerning the imperfection and abolition of the Levitical law.

On the other hand it must be granted, that the twentieth chapter of the Apocalypse, in which is described the kingdom of a thousand years, does not contain all that the ancient Chiliafts assigned to their Millennium. It contains nothing of offerings and of a Jewish temple, and this addition was made by the Chiliafts from the nine last chapters of Ezekiel, which they interpreted literally. Nor is mention made of marriages in the twentieth chapter of the Apocalypse; but in the description which Ezekiel makes of his temple, are given laws for the marriage of priests, to which the Chiliafts probably appealed in support of their opinion. That the saints should rule over the unregenerate, is a doctrine, which stands more plainly in the Apocalypse: but by the saints we may understand either the church of God, or the Jewish nation returned to their own country. The first resurrection, which is to precede the kingdom of a thousand years, is clearly taught in this chapter, if we take the words as they are, and do not have recourse to figurative explanations: and though they, who rise from the dead,  
are,

<sup>h</sup> Art. XVII. de reditu Christo ad judicium.



are, according to this chapter, not to be the only inhabitants of the kingdom, it appears, that they are to take part in it as princes and magistrates, and to return from a better life, which their souls enjoyed, to this earthly one, which is a humiliation. In order to remove this difficulty, those commentators, who are not Chiliafts, explain the first resurrection as a mere figure.

The twentieth chapter of the Apocalypse, which occasioned the greatest part of the objections made by the Antichiliafts, seems to have been formed from the thirty-seventh, thirty-eighth, and thirty-ninth chapters of Ezekiel; only what Ezekiel had said is shortened, and the picturesque beauties, as in other parts of the Apocalypse, greatly improved. Ezekiel prophesies an invasion of Magog, which was certainly not fulfilled when the Apocalypse was written, and, if we take his words literally, seems to threaten the Jews, who lived in the promised land, with a long interruption of their prosperity. Immediately before, in the thirty-seventh chapter, Ezekiel had seen a resurrection of the dead, which however is to be interpreted, not literally of the coming of dead bodies to life, but according to Ezekiel's own explanation, of the resurrection of the Jewish state after the captivity, though many of the Jewish commentators themselves have taken Ezekiel in a strict sense. In like manner the author of the Apocalypse prophesies a first resurrection which is to take place before the prosperity of the church is interrupted by Magog. Whether that first resurrection is to be understood literally or figuratively is a question, into which I cannot enter at present. Whoever regards the Apocalypse as a mere human composition, may say, that the author of it misunderstood Ezekiel, and interpreted him more literally than the prophet himself intended. On the other hand, they, who receive the Apocalypse as a divine work, will find in a comparison of the Apocalypse with Ezekiel the best means of freeing the doctrine of a first resurrection of its improbability: for they need only say, that the author of the former  
treats

treats the same subject, which Ezekiel had prophesied more clearly, and that he took for granted his readers would understand him in such a manner as Ezekiel intended to be understood.

The description given in the Apocalypse of the kingdom of the beast is taken from Daniel, but is augmented by the addition of various circumstances. It must be remarked however, that in the Apocalypse the beast is never called Antichrist, a name, which occurs no where, but in the Epistles of St. John, and is there used in a sense which has no relation to the apocalyptic beast or harlot. If the term Antichrist therefore be taken in its biblical sense, the doctrine relative to Antichrist cannot be proved from the Apocalypse.

Thus much have I thought it necessary to say, rather historically than dogmatically concerning the doctrines delivered in the Apocalypse, because it is of importance to know, whether they contradict the other doctrines of the New Testament. I confess, that during this inquiry, my belief in the divine authority of the Apocalypse has received no more confirmation than it had before: and I must leave the decision of this important question to every man's private judgement.

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FINIS.

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